





*W. H. Woodhouse, Jr.*









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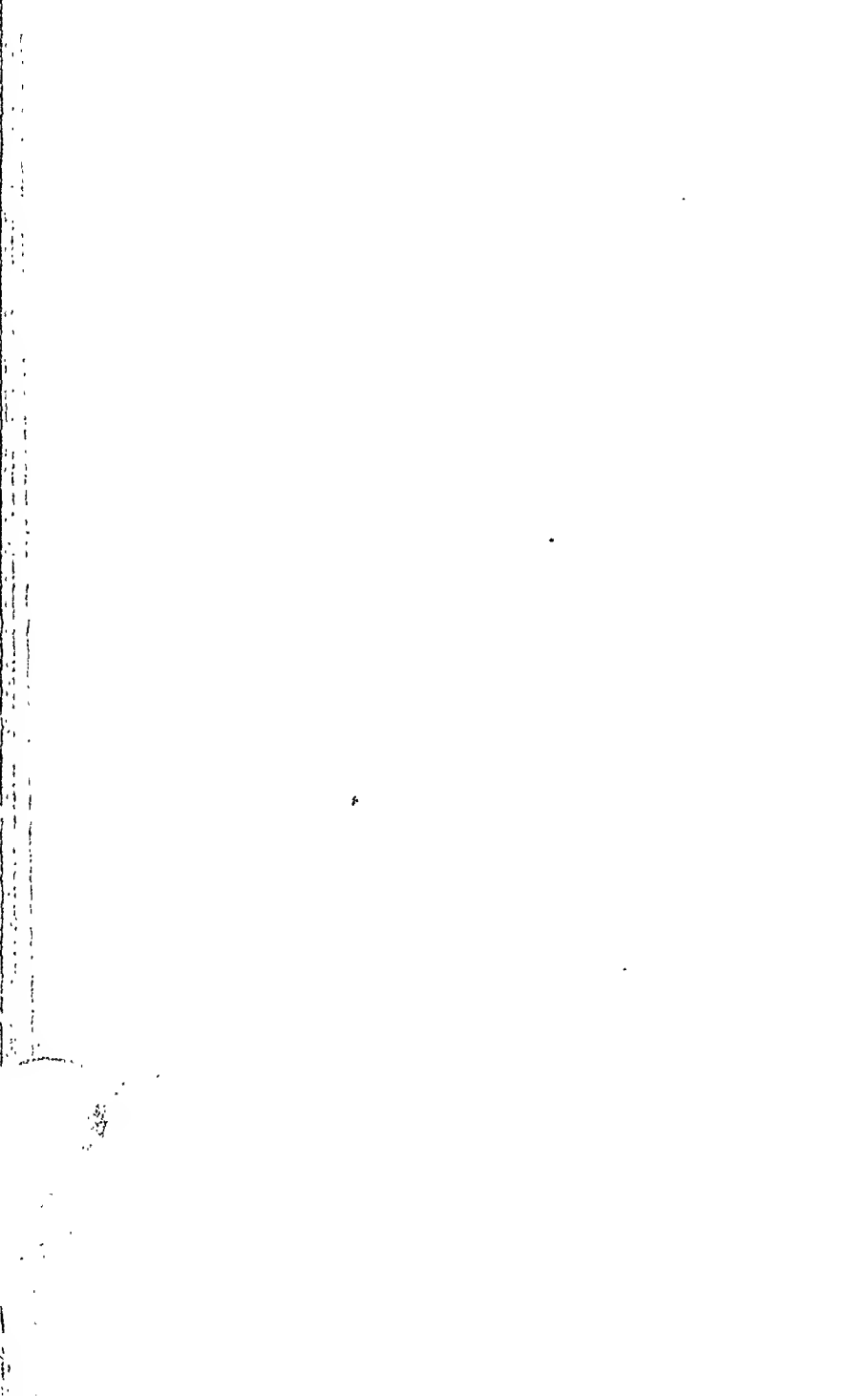












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In 1843, in Kreuznach, Marx married Jenny von Westphalen, a childhood friend to whom he had been engaged while still a student. His wife came from a reactionary family of the Prussian nobility. Her elder brother was Prussian Minister of the Interior at a most reactionary period, 1850-58. In the autumn of 1843 Marx went to Paris in order, together with Arnold Ruge (born 1802, died 1880; a Left Hegelian; in 1825-30, in prison; after 1848, a political exile; after 1866-70, a Bismarckian), to publish a radical magazine abroad. Only one issue of this magazine, *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*, appeared. It was discontinued owing to the difficulty of secret distribution in Germany and to disagreements with Ruge. In his articles in this magazine Marx already appears as a revolutionist: he advocates the “merciless criticism of everything existing,” and in particular the “criticism of arms,” and appeals to the *masses* and to the *proletariat*.

<sup>1</sup> F. Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, Eng. ed., 1946, p. 22.—Ed.

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respondence between Marx and Engels (published in 1913)<sup>1</sup> clearly reveals. Marx and his family suffered dire poverty. Had it not been for Engels' constant and self-sacrificing financial support, Marx would not only have been unable to bring his work on *Capital* to a conclusion, but would have inevitably perished from want. Moreover, the prevailing doctrines and trends of petty-bourgeois Socialism, and of non-proletarian Socialism in general, forced Marx to carry on a continuous and merciless fight and sometimes to repel the most savage and monstrous personal attacks (*Herr Vogt*). Holding aloof from the circles of political exiles, Marx developed his materialist theory in a number of historic works (see *Bibliography*), devoting his efforts chiefly to the study of political economy. Marx revolutionized this science (see below, "The Marxian Doctrine") in his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859) and *Capital* (Vol. I, 1867).

The period of revival of the democratic movements at the end of the 'fifties and in the 'sixties recalled Marx to practical activity. In 1864 (September 28) the International Workingmen's Association—the famous First International—was founded in London. Marx was the heart and soul of this organization; he was the author of its first Address and of a host of resolutions, declarations and manifestoes. By uniting the labour movement of various countries, by striving to direct into the channel of joint activity the various forms of non-proletarian, pre-Marxian Socialism (Mazzini, Proudhon, Bakunin, liberal trade unionism in England, Lassalleian vacillations to the Right in Germany, etc.), and by combating the theories of all these sects and schools, Marx hammered out a uniform tactic for the proletarian struggle of the working class in the various countries. After the fall of the Paris Commune (1871)—of which Marx gave such a profound, clear-cut, brilliant, *effective* and revolutionary analysis (*The Civil War in France*, 1871), and after the International was split by the Bakunists, the existence of that organization in Europe became impossible. After the Hague Congress of the International (1872) Marx had the General Council of the International transferred to New York.

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## PHILOSOPHICAL MATERIALISM

From 1844-45 on, when his views took shape, Marx was a materialist, in particular, a follower of Ludwig Feuerbach, whose weak sides he even later considered to consist exclusively in the fact that his materialism was not consistent and comprehensive enough. Marx regarded the historic and "epoch-making" importance of Feuerbach to be that he had resolutely broken away from Hegelian idealism and had proclaimed materialism, which already "in the eighteenth century, especially in France, had been a struggle not only against the existing political institutions and against ... religion and theology, but also ... against all metaphysics" (in the sense of "intoxicated speculation" as distinct from "sober philosophy"). (*The Holy Family*, in the *Literarischer Nachlaß*.) "To Hegel..." wrote Marx, "the process of thinking, which, under the name of 'the Idea,' he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos [creator] of the real world.... With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought." (*Capital*, Vol. I, p. XXX; Author's Preface to the Second Edition.) In full conformity with this materialist philosophy of Marx's, and expounding it, Frederick Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring* (which Marx read in manuscript): "The unity of the world does not consist in its being.... The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved ... by a long and tedious development of philosophy and natural science...."<sup>1</sup> "*Motion is the mode of existence of matter*. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion," "motion without matter," "nor can there be...."<sup>2</sup> "If the ... question is raised: what then are thought and consciousness, and whence they come, it becomes apparent that they are products of the human brain and that man himself is a product of nature, which has been developed in and along with its environment; whence it is self-evident that the

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to his recognition that "as long as we actually observe and think, we cannot possibly get away from materialism," at the same time reproaches him for leaving a "loophole" for agnosticism, for Humeism. It is especially important to note Marx's view on the relation between freedom and necessity: "'Necessity is blind only in so far as it is not understood.'" "Freedom is the appreciation of necessity." (Engels, *Anti-Dühring*.)<sup>1</sup> This means the recognition of objective law in nature and of the dialectical transformation of necessity into freedom (in the same manner as the transformation of the unknown, but knowable, "thing-in-itself" into the "thing-for-us," of the "essence of things" into "phenomena"). Marx and Engels considered the fundamental limitations of the "old" materialism, including the materialism of Feuerbach (and still more of the "vulgar" materialism of Büchner, Vogt and Moleschott), to be: (1) that this materialism was "predominantly mechanical," failing to take account of the latest developments of chemistry and biology (in our day it would be necessary to add: and of the electrical theory of matter); (2) that the old materialism was non-historical, non-dialectical (metaphysical, in the sense of anti-dialectical), and did not adhere consistently and comprehensively to the standpoint of development; (3) that it regarded the "human essence" abstractly and not as the "*ensemble*" of (concretely defined historical) "social relations," and therefore only "interpreted" the world, whereas the point is to "change" it; that is to say, it did not understand the importance of "revolutionary practical activity."

## DIALECTICS

Hegelian dialectics, as the most comprehensive, the most rich in content, and the most profound doctrine of development, was regarded by Marx and Engels as the greatest achievement of classical German philosophy. They considered every other formulation of the principle of development, of evolution, one-sided and poor in content, and distorting and mutilating the real course of development (often proceeding by

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 130.—Ed.

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ences."<sup>1</sup> Of former philosophy there remains "the science of thought and its laws—formal logic and dialectics."<sup>2</sup> And dialectics, as understood by Marx, and in conformity with Hegel, includes what is now called the theory of knowledge, or epistemology, which, too, must regard its subject matter historically, studying and generalizing the origin and development of knowledge, the transition from *non-knowledge* to knowledge.

Nowadays, the idea of development, of evolution, has penetrated the social consciousness almost in its entirety, but by different ways, not by way of the Hegelian philosophy. But as formulated by Marx and Engels on the basis of Hegel, this idea is far more comprehensive, far richer in content than the current idea of evolution. A development that seemingly repeats the stages already passed, but repeats them otherwise, on a higher basis ("negation of negation"), a development, so to speak, in spirals, not in a straight line;—a development by leaps, catastrophes, revolutions;—"breaks in continuity";—the transformation of quantity into quality;—the inner impulses to development, imparted by the contradiction and conflict of the various forces and tendencies acting on a given body, or within a given phenomenon, or within a given society;—the interdependence and the closest, indissoluble connection of *all* sides of every phenomenon (while history constantly discloses ever new sides), a connection that provides a uniform, law-governed, universal process of motion—such are some of the features of dialectics as a richer (than the ordinary) doctrine of development. (See Marx's letter to Engels of January 8, 1868, in which he ridicules Stein's "wooden trichotomies," which it would be absurd to confuse with materialist dialectics.)

## THE MATERIALIST CONCEPTION OF HISTORY

Having realized the inconsistency, incompleteness, and one-sidedness of the old materialism, Marx became convinced of the necessity of "bringing the science of society ... into har-

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production. . . . In broad outlines we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois modes of production as so many progressive epochs in the economic formation of society."<sup>1</sup> (See Marx's brief formulation in a letter to Engels dated July 7, 1866: "Our theory that the organization of labour is determined by the means of production.")

The discovery of the materialist conception of history, or rather, the consistent continuation, extension of materialism to the domain of social phenomena, removed two of the chief defects of earlier historical theories. In the first place, they at best examined only the ideological motives of the historical activity of human beings, without investigating what produced these motives, without grasping the objective laws governing the development of the system of social relations, and without discerning the roots of these relations in the degree of development of material production; in the second place it was precisely the activities of the *masses* of the population that the earlier theories did not cover, whereas historical materialism made it possible for the first time to study with the accuracy of the natural sciences the social conditions of the life of the masses and the changes in these conditions. Pre-Marxian "sociology" and historiography *at best* provided an accumulation of raw facts, collected at random, and a depiction of certain sides of the historical process. By examining the *ensemble* of all the opposing tendencies, by reducing them to precisely definable conditions of life and production of the various *classes* of society, by discarding subjectivism and arbitrariness in the choice of various "leading" ideas or in their interpretation, and by disclosing that all ideas and all the various tendencies, without exception, have their *roots* in the condition of the material forces of production, Marxism pointed the way to an all-embracing and comprehensive study of the process of the genesis, development, and decline of social-economic formations. People make their own history. But what determines the motives of people, of the mass of people, that is; what gives rise to the clash of conflicting ideas and strivings; what is the ensemble of all these clashes of the whole mass of human societies; what are the objective conditions of production of

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all these products are equated to one another in exchange. Consequently, what is common to all commodities is not the concrete labour of a definite branch of production, not labour of one particular kind, but *abstract* human labour—human labour in general. All the labour power of a given society, as represented in the sum total of values of all commodities, is one and the same human labour power; millions and millions of acts of exchange prove this. And, consequently, each particular commodity represents only a certain share of the *socially necessary* labour time. The magnitude of value is determined by the amount of socially necessary labour, or by the labour time that is socially necessary for the production of the given commodity, of the given use-value. "... Whenever, by an exchange, we equate as values our different products, by that very act, we also equate, as human labour, the different kinds of labour expended upon them. We are not aware of this, nevertheless we do it."<sup>1</sup> As one of the earlier economists said, value is a relation between two persons; only he ought to have added: a relation screened by a material integument. We can understand what value is only when we consider it from the standpoint of the system of social relations of production of one particular historical formation of society, relations, moreover, which manifest themselves in the mass phenomenon of exchange, a phenomenon which repeats itself millions upon millions of times. "As values, all commodities are only definite masses of congealed labour time."<sup>2</sup> Having made a detailed analysis of the twofold character of the labour incorporated in commodities, Marx goes on to analyse the *forms of value and money*. Marx's main task here is to study the *origin* of the money form of value, to study the *historical process* of development of exchange, from isolated and casual acts of exchange ("elementary or accidental form of value," in which a given quantity of one commodity is exchanged for a given quantity of another) to the universal form of value, in which a number of different commodities are exchanged for one and the same particular commodity, and to the money form of value, when gold becomes this particular commodity, the

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one another, whereas what we have here is not an individual phenomenon but a mass, average, social phenomenon. In order to derive surplus value, the owner of money "must . . . find . . . in the market a commodity whose use-value possesses the peculiar property of being a source of value"<sup>1</sup>—a commodity whose process of consumption is at the same time a process of creation of value. And such a commodity exists. It is human labour power. Its consumption is labour, and labour creates value. The owner of money buys labour power at its value, which, like the value of every other commodity, is determined by the socially necessary labour time requisite for its production (*i.e.*, the cost of maintaining the worker and his family). Having bought labour power, the owner of money is entitled to use it, that is, to set it to work, for the whole day—twelve hours, let us suppose. Yet, in the course of six hours ("necessary" labour time) the labourer produces product sufficient to cover the cost of his own maintenance; and in the course of the next six hours ("surplus" labour time), he produces "surplus" product, or surplus value, for which the capitalist does not pay. In capital, therefore, from the standpoint of the process of production, two parts must be distinguished: constant capital, expended on means of production (machinery, tools, raw materials, etc.), the value of which, without any change, is transferred (all at once or part by part) to the finished product; and variable capital, expended on labour power. The value of this latter capital is not invariable, but grows in the labour process, creating surplus value. Therefore, to express the degree of exploitation of labour power by capital, surplus value must be compared not with the whole capital but only with the variable capital. Thus in the example given, the rate of surplus value, as Marx calls this ratio, will be 6:6, *i.e.*, 100 per cent.

The historical conditions necessary for the genesis of capital were, firstly, the accumulation of a certain sum of money in the hands of individuals and a relatively high level of development of commodity production in general, and, secondly, the existence of a labourer who is "free" in a double sense: free from all constraint or restriction on the sale of his labour power,

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growth of the constant capital share (of the total capital) as compared with the variable capital share.

The accumulation of capital, by accelerating the replacement of workers by machinery and creating wealth at one pole and poverty at the other, also gives rise to what is called the "reserve army of labour," to the "relative surplus" of workers, or "capitalist overpopulation," which assumes the most diverse forms and enables capital to expand production at an extremely fast rate. This, in conjunction with credit facilities and the accumulation of capital in the means of production, incidentally furnishes the clue to the *crises* of overproduction that occur periodically in capitalist countries—at first at an average of every ten years, and later at more lengthy and less definite intervals. From the accumulation of capital under capitalism must be distinguished what is known as primitive accumulation: the forcible divorcement of the worker from the means of production, the driving of the peasants from the land, the stealing of the commons, the system of colonies and national debts, protective tariffs, and the like. "Primitive accumulation" creates the "free" proletariat at one pole, and the owner of money, the capitalist, at the other.

The "*historical tendency of capitalist accumulation*" is described by Marx in the following famous words: "The expropriation of the immediate producers was accomplished with merciless Vandalism and under the stimulus of passions the most infamous, the most sordid, the pettiest, the most meanly odious. Self-earned private property [of the peasant and handicraftsman], that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent labouring-individual with the conditions of his labour, is supplanted by capitalistic private property, which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labour of others. . . . That which is now to be expropriated is no longer the labourer working for himself, but the capitalist exploiting many labourers. This expropriation is accomplished by the action of the immanent laws of capitalistic production itself, by the centralization of capital. One capitalist always kills many. Hand in hand with this centralization, or this expropriation of many capitalists by few, develop, on an ever-extending scale, the co-operative form of the labour process, the conscious

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analysis from the standpoint of mass economic phenomena, of the social economy as a whole, and not from the standpoint of individual cases or of the external, superficial aspects of competition, to which vulgar political economy and the modern "theory of marginal utility" are frequently limited. Marx first analyses the origin of surplus value, and then goes on to consider its division into profit, interest, and ground rent. Profit is the ratio between the surplus value and the total capital invested in an undertaking. Capital with a "high organic composition" (i.e., with a preponderance of constant capital over variable capital exceeding the social average) yields a lower than average rate of profit; capital with a "low organic composition" yields a higher than average rate of profit. The competition of capitals and the freedom with which they transfer from one branch of production to another reduce the rate of profit to the average in both cases. The sum total of the values of all the commodities of a given society coincides with the sum total of prices of the commodities; but, owing to competition, in individual undertakings and branches of production commodities are sold not at their values but at the *prices of production* (or production prices), which are equal to the expended capital plus the average profit.

In this way the well-known and indisputable fact of the divergence between prices and values and of the equalization of profits is fully explained by Marx on the basis of the law of value; for the sum total of values of all commodities coincides with the sum total of prices. However, the reduction of (social) value to (individual) prices does not take place simply and directly, but in a very complex way. It is quite natural that in a society of separate producers of commodities, who are united only by the market, law can reveal itself only as an average, social, mass law, when individual deviations to one side or the other mutually compensate one another.

An increase in the productivity of labour implies a more rapid growth of constant capital as compared with variable capital. And since surplus value is a function of variable capital alone, it is obvious that the rate of profit (the ratio of surplus value to the whole capital, and not to its variable part alone) tends to fall. Marx makes a detailed analysis of this

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rent from the soil, while leaving it to the tiller of the soil himself to see how he can extract his wages."<sup>1</sup> As a rule the peasant cedes to capitalist society, *i.e.*, to the capitalist class, even a part of the wages, sinking "to the level of the *Irish tenant farmer*—all under the pretence of being a *private proprietor*." (*The Class Struggles in France 1848-50*.)<sup>2</sup> What is "one of the causes which keeps the price of cereals lower in countries with a predominance of small farmers than in countries with a capitalist mode of production"? (*Capital*, Vol. III.)<sup>3</sup> It is that the peasant cedes to society (*i.e.*, to the capitalist class) part of his surplus product without an equivalent. "This lower price [of cereals and other agricultural produce] is also a result of the poverty of the producers and by no means of the productivity of their labour." (*Capital*, Vol. III.)<sup>4</sup> The small-holding system, which is the normal form of small-scale production, deteriorates, collapses, perishes under capitalism. "Small peasants' property excludes by its very nature the development of the social powers of production of labour, the social forms of labour, the social concentration of capitals, cattle raising on a large scale, and a progressive application of science. Usury and a system of taxation must impoverish it everywhere. The expenditure of capital in the price of the land withdraws this capital from cultivation. An infinite dissipation of means of production and an isolation of the producers themselves go with it. [Co-operative societies, *i.e.*, associations of small peasants, while playing an extremely progressive bourgeois role, only weaken this tendency without eliminating it; nor must it be forgotten that these co-operative societies do much for the well-to-do peasants, and very little, almost nothing, for the mass of poor peasants; and then the associations themselves become exploiters of wage-labour.] Also an enormous waste of human energy. A progressive deterioration of the conditions of production and a raising of the price of means of production is a necessary law of small peasants' property."<sup>5</sup> In agriculture

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priators." This conversion will directly result in an immense increase in productivity of labour, a reduction of working hours, and the replacement of the remnants, the ruins of small-scale, primitive, disunited production by collective and improved labour. Capitalism finally snaps the bond between agriculture and industry; but at the same time, in its highest development it prepares new elements of this bond, of a union between industry and agriculture based on the conscious application of science and the combination of collective labour, and on a redistribution of the human population (putting an end at one and the same time to the rural remoteness, isolation and barbarism, and to the unnatural concentration of vast masses of people in big cities). A new form of family, new conditions in the status of women and in the upbringing of the younger generation are being prepared by the highest forms of modern capitalism: female and child labour and the break-up of the patriarchal family by capitalism inevitably assume the most terrible, disastrous, and repulsive forms in modern society. Nevertheless "... modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economical foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes. It is, of course, just as absurd to hold the Teutonic-Christian form of the family to be absolute and final as it would be to apply that character to the ancient Roman, the ancient Greek, or the Eastern forms which, moreover, taken together form a series in historic development. Moreover, it is obvious that the fact of the collective working group being composed of individuals of both sexes and all ages, must necessarily, under suitable conditions, become a source of humane development; although in its spontaneously developed, brutal, capitalistic form, where the labourer exists for the process of production, and not the process of production for the labourer, that fact is a pestiferous source of corruption and slavery." (*Capital*, Vol. I.)<sup>1</sup> In the factory system is to be found "the germ of the education of the future, an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 496.—*Ed.*

priators." This conversion will directly result in an immense increase in productivity of labour, a reduction of working hours, and the replacement of the remnants, the ruins of small-scale, primitive, disunited production by collective and improved labour. Capitalism finally snaps the bond between agriculture and industry; but at the same time, in its highest development it prepares new elements of this bond, of a union between industry and agriculture based on the conscious application of science and the combination of collective labour, and on a redistribution of the human population (putting an end at one and the same time to the rural remoteness, isolation and barbarism, and to the unnatural concentration of vast masses of people in big cities). A new form of family, new conditions in the status of women and in the upbringing of the younger generation are being prepared by the highest forms of modern capitalism: female and child labour and the break-up of the patriarchal family by capitalism inevitably assume the most terrible, disastrous, and repulsive forms in modern society. Nevertheless "... modern industry, by assigning as it does an important part in the process of production, outside the domestic sphere, to women, to young persons, and to children of both sexes, creates a new economical foundation for a higher form of the family and of the relations between the sexes. It is, of course, just as absurd to hold the Teutonic-Christian form of the family to be absolute and final as it would be to apply that character to the ancient Roman, the ancient Greek, or the Eastern forms which, moreover, taken together form a series in historic development. Moreover, it is obvious that the fact of the collective working group being composed of individuals of both sexes and all ages, must necessarily, under suitable conditions, become a source of humane development; although in its spontaneously developed, brutal, capitalistic form, where the labourer exists for the process of production, and not the process of production for the labourer, that fact is a pestiferous source of corruption and slavery." (*Capital*, Vol. I.)<sup>1</sup> In the factory system is to be found "the germ of the education of the future, an education that will, in the case of every child over a given age, combine

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bourgeois state, the democratic republic, in no way removes this fact, but merely changes its form (connection between the government and the stock exchange, corruption—direct and indirect—of the officialdom and the press, etc.). Socialism, by leading to the abolition of classes, will thereby lead to the abolition of the state. "The first act," writes Engels in *Anti-Dühring*, "in which the state really comes forward as the representative of society as a whole—the taking possession of the means of production in the name of society—is at the same time its last independent act as a state. The interference of the state power in social relations becomes superfluous in one sphere after another, and then ceases of itself. The government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not 'abolished,' it *withers away*."<sup>1</sup> "The society that will reorganize production on the basis of the free and equal association of the producers will put the machinery of state where it will then belong: into the museum of antiquities by the side of the spinning wheel and the bronze axe." (Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*.)<sup>2</sup>

Finally, as regards the attitude of Marxian Socialism towards the small peasantry, which will continue to exist in the period of the expropriation of the expropriators, we must refer to a declaration made by Engels which expresses Marx's views. "When we are in possession of the state power, we shall not even think of forcibly expropriating the small peasants (with or without compensation), as we shall have to do in relation to the large landowners. Our task as regards the small peasants will first of all be to lead their private enterprises and private property into co-operative lines, not forcibly, but by example and by granting public aid for this purpose. And then, of course, we shall have ample means of showing the small peasant advantages which even now should become obvious to him." (Engels, "The Peasant Question in France and Germany." Original in the *Neue Zeit*.)

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development, at each moment, proletarian tactics must take account of this objectively inevitable dialectics of human history, on the one hand utilizing the periods of political stagnation or of sluggish, so-called "peaceful," development in order to develop the class consciousness, strength and fighting capacity of the advanced class, and, on the other hand, conducting all this work of utilization towards the "final aim" of the movement of the advanced class and towards the creation in it of the faculty for practically performing great tasks in the great days in which "twenty years are concentrated." Two of Marx's arguments are of special importance in this connection: one of these is contained in *The Poverty of Philosophy* and concerns the economic struggle and economic organizations of the proletariat; the other is contained in the *Communist Manifesto* and concerns the political tasks of the proletariat. The first argument runs as follows: "Large-scale industry concentrates in one place a crowd of people unknown to one another. Competition divides their interests. But the maintenance of wages, this common interest which they have against their boss, unites them in a common thought of resistance—*combination*.... Combinations, at first isolated, constitute themselves into groups... and in face of always united capital, the maintenance of the association becomes more necessary to them [*i.e.*, the workers] than that of wages.... In this struggle—a veritable civil war—are united and developed all the elements necessary for a coming battle. Once it has reached this point, association takes on a political character."<sup>1</sup> Here we have the program and tactics of the economic struggle and of the trade union movement for several decades to come, for the whole long period in which the proletariat will muster its forces for the "coming battle." Side by side with this must be placed numerous references by Marx and Engels to the example of the British labour movement: how industrial "prosperity" leads to attempts "to buy the workers" (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. I, p. 136), to divert them from the struggle; how this prosperity generally "demoralizes the workers" (Vol. II, p. 218); how the British proletariat becomes "bourgeoisified"—"this most bourgeois of

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timidated by the world storm... nowhere with energy, everywhere with plagiarism... without initiative... an execrable old man, doomed to guide the first youthful impulses of a robust people in his own senile interests..." (*Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, 1848; see *Literarischer Nachlaß*, Vol. III, p. 212.) About twenty years later, in a letter to Engels (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 224), Marx declared that the cause of the failure of the Revolution of 1848 was that the bourgeoisie had preferred peace with slavery to the mere prospect of a fight for freedom. When the revolutionary era of 1848-49 ended, Marx opposed every attempt to play at revolution (the fight he put up against Schapper and Willich), and insisted on the ability to work in the new phase which in a seemingly "peaceful" way was preparing for new revolutions. The spirit in which Marx wanted the work to be carried on is shown by his estimate of the situation in Germany in 1856, the blackest period of reaction: "The whole thing in Germany will depend on the possibility to back the proletarian revolution by some second edition of the Peasant War." (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. II, p. 108.) As long as the democratic (bourgeois) revolution in Germany was not finished, Marx wholly concentrated attention in the tactics of the Socialist proletariat on developing the democratic energy of the peasantry. He held that Lassalle's attitude was "objectively... a betrayal of the whole workers' movement to Prussia" (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 210), because Lassalle, among other things, connived at the actions of the Junkers and Prussian nationalism. "In a predominantly agricultural country," wrote Engels in 1865, exchanging ideas with Marx on the subject of an intended joint statement by them in the press, "... it is dastardly... in the name of the industrial proletariat to attack the bourgeoisie exclusively, and never to say a word about the patriarchal cudgel exploitation of the rural proletariat by the big feudal nobles." (*Briefwechsel*, Vol. III, p. 217.) From 1864 to 1870, when the era of the completion of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Germany, the era of the efforts of the exploiting classes of Prussia and Austria to complete this revolution in one way or another *from above*, was coming to an end, Marx not only condemned Lassalle, who was coquetting with Bismarck, but also corrected Liebknecht, who had inclined towards

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These views of Marx and Engels have now been adopted by all proletarians who are fighting for their emancipation. But when in the 'forties the two friends took part in the Socialist literature and social movements of their time, such opinions were absolutely new. At that time there were many people, talented and untalented, honest and dishonest, who while absorbed in the struggle for political freedom, in the struggle against the despotism of emperors, police and priests, failed to observe the antagonism between the interests of the bourgeoisie and the interests of the proletariat. These people would not even admit the idea that the workers should act as an independent social force. On the other hand, there were many dreamers, some of them geniuses, who thought that it was only necessary to convince the rulers and the governing classes of the injustice of the modern social order, and it would then be easy to establish peace and general well-being on earth. They dreamt of Socialism without a struggle. Lastly, nearly all the Socialists of that time, and the friends of the working class in general, regarded the proletariat only as an *ulcer*, and observed with horror how this ulcer grew with the growth of industry. They all, therefore, were intent on how to stop the development of industry and of the proletariat, how to stop the "wheel of history." Far from sharing the general fear of the development of the proletariat, Marx and Engels placed all their hopes on the continued growth of the proletariat. The greater the number of proletarians, the greater would be their power as a revolutionary class, and the nearer and more possible would Socialism become. The services rendered by Marx and Engels to the working class may be expressed in a few words thus: they taught the working class to know itself and be conscious of itself, and they substituted science for dreams.

That is why the name and life of Engels should be known to every worker. That is why in this magazine, the aim of which, as of all our publications, is to awaken class consciousness in the Russian workers, we must sketch the life and work of Frederick Engels, one of the two great teachers of the modern proletariat.

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Hegelians, Marx and Engels were materialists. Regarding the world and humanity materialistically, they perceived that just as material causes lie at the basis of all the phenomena of nature, so the development of human society is conditioned by the development of material, productive forces. On the development of productive forces depend the relations which men enter into one with another in the production of the things required for the satisfaction of human needs. And in these relations lies the explanation of all the phenomena of social life, human aspirations, ideas and laws. The development of productive forces creates social relations based upon private property, but now we see that this same development of the productive forces deprives the majority of their property and concentrates it in the hands of an insignificant minority. It destroys property, the basis of the modern social order, it itself strives towards the very aim which the Socialists have set themselves. All the Socialists have to do is to realize which of the social forces, owing to its position in modern society, is interested in bringing about Socialism, and to impart to this force the consciousness of its interests and of its historical task. This force is the proletariat. Engels got to know it in England, in the centre of British industry, Manchester, where he settled in 1842, entering the service of a commercial house of which his father was a shareholder. Here Engels did not merely sit in the factory office but wandered about the slums in which the workers were cooped up. He saw their poverty and misery with his own eyes. But he did not confine himself to personal observations. He read all that had been revealed before him on the condition of the British working class and carefully studied all the official documents he could lay his hands on. The fruit of these studies and observations was the book which appeared in 1845: *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. We have already mentioned the chief service rendered by Engels as the author of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*. Many even before Engels had described the sufferings of the proletariat and had pointed to the necessity of helping it. Engels was the first to say that *not only* was the proletariat a suffering class, but that, in fact, the disgraceful economic condition of the proletariat was driving it irresistibly forward and compelling

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From 1845 to 1847 Engels lived in Brussels and Paris, combining scientific pursuits with practical activities among the German workers in Brussels and Paris. Here Marx and Engels formed contact with the secret German Communist League, which commissioned them to expound the main principles of the Socialism they had worked out. Thus arose the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of Marx and Engels, published in 1848. This little booklet is worth whole volumes; to this day its spirit inspires and motivates the organized and fighting proletariat of the entire civilized world.

The revolution of 1848, which broke out first in France and then spread to other countries of Western Europe, brought Marx and Engels back to their native country. Here, in Rhenish Prussia, they took charge of the democratic *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* published in Cologne. The two friends were the heart and soul of all revolutionary-democratic aspirations in Rhenish Prussia. They defended the interests of the people and of freedom against the reactionary forces to the last ditch. The reactionary forces, as we know, gained the upper hand. The *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* was suppressed. Marx, who during his exile had lost his Prussian citizenship, was deported; but Engels took part in the armed popular uprising, fought for liberty in three battles, and after the defeat of the rebels fled to London, via Switzerland.

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After the movement of 1848-49, Marx and Engels in exile did not occupy themselves with science alone. In 1864 Marx founded the International Workingmen's Association, and led this society for a whole decade. Engels also took an active part in its affairs. The work of the International Association, which, in accordance with Marx's idea, united proletarians of all countries, was of tremendous significance in the development of the labour movement. But even after the International Association came to an end in the 'seventies the unifying role of Marx and Engels did not cease. On the contrary, it may be said that their importance as spiritual leaders of the labour movement steadily grew, inasmuch as the movement itself grew uninterruptedly. After the death of Marx, Engels continued alone to be the counsellor and leader of the European Socialists. His advice and directions were sought for equally by the German Socialists, who despite government persecution, grew rapidly and steadily in strength, and by representatives of backward countries, such as Spaniards, Rumanians and Russians, who were obliged to ponder over and weigh their first steps. They

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From the technical standpoint, the index is unsatisfactory—only one for all four volumes (for instance, Kautsky and Stirling are omitted); the notes on each letter are too scanty and are lost in the prefaces of the editor instead of being placed in proximity to the letters they refer to, as they were by Sorge, and so forth.

The price of the publication is unduly high—about 20 rubles for the four volumes. There can be no doubt that the complete correspondence could and should have been published in a less luxurious edition at a more popular price, and that, in addition, a selection of passages most important from the standpoint of principle could and should have been published for wide distribution among workers.

All these defects of the edition of course hamper a study of the correspondence. This is a pity, because its scientific and political value is tremendous. Not only do Marx and Engels stand out before the reader in clear relief in all their greatness, but the extremely rich theoretical content of Marxism is unfolded in a highly graphic way, because in the letters Marx and Engels return again and again to the most diverse aspects of their teaching, emphasizing and explaining—at times discussing and debating—what is newest (in relation to earlier views), most important and most difficult.

There unfolds before the reader a strikingly vivid picture of the history of the labour movement all over the world—at its most important junctures and in its most essential points. Even more valuable is the history of the *politics* of the working class. On the most diverse occasions, in various countries of the old and new worlds, and at diverse historical moments, Marx and Engels discuss the most important principles of the *presentation* of the *political* tasks of the working class. And the period covered by the correspondence was a period in which the working class separated off from bourgeois democracy, a period in which an independent labour movement arose, a period in which the fundamental principles of proletarian tactics and policy were defined. The more we have occasion in our day to observe how the labour movement in vari-

ponents is becoming increasingly widespread among present-day German Social-Democrats.

From the technical standpoint, the index is unsatisfactory—only one for all four volumes (for instance, Kautsky and Stirling are omitted); the notes on each letter are too scanty and are lost in the prefaces of the editor instead of being placed in proximity to the letters they refer to, as they were by Sorge, and so forth.

The price of the publication is unduly high—about 20 rubles for the four volumes. There can be no doubt that the complete correspondence could and should have been published in a less luxurious edition at a more popular price, and that, in addition, a selection of passages most important from the standpoint of principle could and should have been published for wide distribution among workers.

All these defects of the edition of course hamper a study of the correspondence. This is a pity, because its scientific and political value is tremendous. Not only do Marx and Engels stand out before the reader in clear relief in all their greatness, but the extremely rich theoretical content of Marxism is unfolded in a highly graphic way, because in the letters Marx and Engels return again and again to the most diverse aspects of their teaching, emphasizing and explaining—at times discussing and debating—what is newest (in relation to earlier views), most important and most difficult.

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despot, a pious manufacturer, who was outraged at his son's continual running about to political meetings and at his Communist views. Were it not for his mother, whom he really loved, Engels wrote, he would not have stood even the few days still remaining until his departure. What petty reasons, what superstitious fears were put forward by the family against his departure, he complained to Marx.

While he was still in Barmen—where he was delayed a little longer by a love affair—Engels gave way to his father and worked for about two weeks in the factory office (his father was a manufacturer). “Huckstering is horrible,” he writes to Marx. “Barmen is horrible, the way they spend their time is horrible, and it is most horrible of all to remain, not merely a bourgeois, but a manufacturer, a bourgeois who actively opposes the proletariat. . . .” He consoled himself, Engels goes on to say, by working on his book on the condition of the working class (this book appeared, as is known, in 1845 and is one of the best works of world Socialist literature). “One can while being a Communist remain in outward conditions a bourgeois and a huckstering beast as long as one does not write, but to carry on wide Communist propaganda and at the same time engage in huckstering and industry will not work. I am leaving. Add to this the drowsy life of a thoroughly Christian-Prussian family—I cannot stand it any longer. I might in the end become a German philistine and introduce philistinism into Communism.” Thus wrote the young Engels. After the Revolution of 1848 the exigencies of life obliged him to return to his father's office and to become a “huckstering beast” for many long years. But he was able to stand firm and to create for himself, not Christian-Prussian surroundings, but entirely different, comradely surroundings, and to become for the rest of his life a relentless foe of the “introduction of philistinism into Communism.”

Social life in the German provinces in 1844 resembled Russian social life at the beginning of the twentieth century, before the Revolution of 1905. There was a general urge for political life, a general seething indignation in opposition to the government; the priests fulminated against the youth for their atheism; children in bourgeois families quarreled with their

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and most widespread Socialist doctrine of the time—Proudhonism. And even before the publication of Proudhon's *Philosophy of Poverty* (October 1846; Marx's reply—the famous book, *The Poverty of Philosophy*—appeared in 1847), Engels, with biting irony and remarkable profundity criticized Proudhon's main ideas, which were then being particularly advocated by the German Socialist Grün. His excellent knowledge of English (which Marx mastered much later) and of English literature enabled Engels at once (letter of September 18, 1846) to point to the example of the bankruptcy of the notorious Proudhonist "labour-exchange bazaars" in England. Proudhon *disgraces* Socialism, Engels exclaims indignantly—it follows from Proudhon that the workers must *buy out* capital.

The 26-year-old Engels simply annihilates "true socialism." We meet this expression in his letter of October 23, 1846, long before the *Communist Manifesto*, and Grün is mentioned as its chief exponent. An "anti-proletarian, petty-bourgeois, philistine" doctrine, "sheer phrasemongering" all sorts of "humanitarian" aspirations, "superstitious fear of 'crude' Communism" (*Löffel-Kommunismus*, literally: "spoon Communism" or "belly Communism"), "peaceful plans of happiness" for mankind—these are some of Engels' epithets, which apply to *all* species of pre-Marxian Socialism.

"The Proudhon Associations' scheme," writes Engels, "was discussed for three evenings. At first I had nearly the whole clique against me. . . . The chief point was to prove the necessity for revolution by force." (October 23, 1846.) In the end he got furious, he writes, and pressed his opponents so that they were obliged to make an open attack on Communism. He demanded a vote on whether they were Communists or not. This greatly horrified the Grünites who began to argue that they met together to discuss "the good of mankind" and that they must know what Communism *really was*. Engels gave them an extremely simple definition so as to permit no opportunity for digressions and evasions. "I therefore defined," Engels writes, "the objects of the Communists in this way: 1) To achieve the interests of the proletariat in opposition to those of the bourgeoisie; 2) To do this through the abolition of private property and its replacement by community of goods; 3) To recognize no

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NOVEMBER 7, 1918

We are unveiling a memorial to the leaders of the world workers' revolution, Marx and Engels.

For ages and ages humanity has suffered and languished under the yoke of an insignificant handful of exploiters, who maltreated millions of toilers. But while the exploiters of an earlier period—the landlords—robbed and oppressed the peasant serfs, who were disunited, scattered and ignorant, the exploiters of the new period, the capitalists, saw facing them among the downtrodden masses the vanguard of these masses, the urban, factory, industrial workers. They were united by the factory, they were enlightened by urban life, they were steeled by the common strike struggle and by revolutionary action.

The great and historic merit of Marx and Engels is that they proved by scientific analysis the inevitability of the collapse of capitalism and its transition to Communism, under which there will be no more exploitation of man by man.

The great and historic merit of Marx and Engels is that they indicated to the proletarians of all countries their role, their task, their mission, namely, to be the first to rise in the revolutionary struggle against capital and to rally around themselves in this struggle *all* the toilers and exploited.

We are living in happy times, when the prophecy of the great Socialists is beginning to be realized. We see the dawn of the international Socialist revolution of the proletariat breaking in a number of countries. The unspeakable horrors of the

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## THE THREE SOURCES AND THREE COMPONENT PARTS OF MARXISM

Throughout the civilized world the teachings of Marx evoke the utmost hostility and hatred of all bourgeois science (both official and liberal), which regards Marxism as a kind of "pernicious sect." And no other attitude is to be expected, for there can be no "impartial" social science in a society based on class struggle. In one way or another, *all* official and liberal science *defends* wage slavery, whereas Marxism has declared relentless war on wage slavery. To expect science to be impartial in a wage-slave society is as silly and naive as to expect impartiality from manufacturers on the question whether workers' wages should be increased by decreasing the profits of capital.

But this is not all. The history of philosophy and the history of social science show with perfect clarity that there is nothing resembling "sectarianism" in Marxism, in the sense of its being a hidebound, petrified doctrine, a doctrine which arose *away from* the highroad of development of world civilization. On the contrary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in the fact that he furnished answers to questions which had already engrossed the foremost minds of humanity. His teachings arose as a direct and immediate *continuation* of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and Socialism.

The Marxian doctrine is omnipotent because it is true. It is complete and harmonious, and provides men with an integral world conception which is irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression. It is the legitimate successor to the best that was created by

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Deepening and developing philosophical materialism, Marx completed it, extended its knowledge of nature to the knowledge of *human society*. Marx's *historical materialism* was one of the greatest achievements of scientific thought. The chaos and arbitrariness that had previously reigned in the views on history and politics gave way to a strikingly integral and harmonious scientific theory, which shows how, in consequence of the growth of productive forces, out of one system of social life another and higher system develops—how capitalism, for instance, grows out of feudalism.

Just as man's knowledge reflects nature..(i.e., developing matter), which exists independently of him, so man's *social knowledge* (i.e., his various views and doctrines—philosophical, religious, political, and so forth) reflects the *economic system* of society. Political institutions are a superstructure on the economic foundation. We see, for example, that the various political forms of the modern European states serve to fortify the rule of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat.

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Having recognized that the economic system is the foundation on which the political superstructure is erected, Marx devoted most attention to the study of this economic system. Marx's principal work, *Capital*, is devoted to a study of the economic system of modern, i.e., capitalist, society.

Classical political economy. before Marx, evolved in England. the most developed of the capitalist countries. Adam Smith and David Ricardo, by their investigations of the economic system, laid the foundations of the *labour theory of value*. Marx continued their work. He rigidly proved and consistently developed this theory. He showed that the value of every com-

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Marx traced the development of capitalism from the first germs of commodity economy, from simple exchange, to its highest forms, to large-scale production.

And the experience of all capitalist countries, old and new, is clearly demonstrating the truth of this Marxian doctrine to increasing numbers of workers every year.

Capitalism has triumphed all over the world, but this triumph is only the prelude to the triumph of labour over capital.

### III

When feudalism was overthrown, and "free" capitalist society appeared on God's earth, it at once became apparent that this freedom meant a new system of oppression and exploitation of the toilers. Various Socialist doctrines immediately began to arise as a reflection of and protest against this oppression. But early Socialism was *utopian* Socialism. It criticized capitalist society, it condemned and damned it, it dreamed of its destruction, it indulged in fancies of a better order and endeavoured to convince the rich of the immorality of exploitation.

But utopian Socialism could not point the real way out. It could not explain the essence of wage slavery under capitalism, nor discover the laws of its development, nor point to the *social force* which is capable of becoming the creator of a new society.

Meanwhile, the stormy revolutions which everywhere in Europe, and especially in France, accompanied the fall of feudalism, of serfdom, more and more clearly revealed the *struggle of classes* as the basis and the motive force of the whole development.

Not a single victory of political freedom over the feudal class was won except against desperate resistance. Not a single capitalist country evolved on a more or less free and democratic basis except by a life and death struggle between the various classes of capitalist society.

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## THE HISTORICAL DESTINY OF THE DOCTRINE OF KARL MARX

The main thing in the doctrine of Marx is that it bring out the historic role of the proletariat as the builder of a Socialist society. Has the progress of world events confirmed this doctrine since it was expounded by Marx?

Marx first advanced it in 1844. The *Communist Manifesto* of Marx and Engels, published in 1848, already gives an integral and systematic exposition of this doctrine, which has remained the best exposition to this day. Subsequent world history clearly falls into three main periods: 1) from the Revolution of 1848 to the Paris Commune (1871); 2) from the Paris Commune to the Russian Revolution (1905); 3) since the Russian Revolution.

Let us see what has been the destiny of Marx's doctrine in each of these periods.

### I

At the beginning of the first period Marx's doctrine by no means dominated. It was only one of the extremely numerous factions or trends of Socialism. The forms of Socialism which did dominate were in the main akin to our *Narodism*: non-comprehension of the materialist basis of historical movement, inability to assign the role and significance of each class in capitalist society, concealment of the bourgeois essence of democratic reforms under diverse, pseudo-socialistic phrases about "the people," "justice," "right," etc.

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### III

But the opportunists had scarcely congratulated themselves on "social peace" and the needlessness of storms under "democracy" when a new source of great world storms opened up in Asia. The Russian revolution was followed by the Turkish, the Persian and the Chinese revolutions. It is in this era of storms and their "repercussion" in Europe that we are now living. Whatever may be the fate of the great Chinese Republic, against which the various "civilized" hyenas are now baring their teeth, no power on earth can restore the old serfdom in Asia, or wipe out the heroic democracy of the masses of the people in the Asiatic and semi-Asiatic countries.

Certain people, who were inattentive to the conditions of preparation and development of the mass struggle, were driven to despair and to anarchism by the prolonged postponements of the decisive struggle against capitalism in Europe. We can now see how short-sighted and craven this anarchist despair is.

The fact that Asia, with its population of eight hundred million, has been drawn into the struggle for these same European ideals should inspire us with courage and not despair.

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# "LEFT-WING" COMMUNISM, AN INFANTILE DISORDER

(Excerpt)

## II. ONE OF THE FUNDAMENTAL CONDITIONS FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE BOLSHEVIKS

Certainly, almost everyone now realizes that the Bolsheviks could not have maintained themselves in power for two and a half months, let alone two and a half years, unless the strictest, truly iron discipline had prevailed in our Party, and unless the latter had been rendered the fullest and unreserved support of the whole mass of the working class, that is, of all its thinking, honest, self-sacrificing and influential elements who are capable of leading or of carrying with them the backward strata.

The dictatorship of the proletariat is a most determined and most ruthless war waged by the new class against a *more powerful* enemy, the bourgeoisie, whose resistance is increased *tenfold* by its overthrow (even if only in one country), and whose power lies not only in the strength of international capital, in the strength and durability of the international connections of the bourgeoisie, but also in the *force of habit*, in the strength of *small production*. For, unfortunately, small production is still very, very widespread in the world, and small production *engenders* capitalism and the bourgeoisie continuously, daily, hourly, spontaneously, and on a mass scale. For all these reasons the dictatorship of the proletariat is essential, and victory over the bourgeoisie is impossible without a long, stubborn and desperate war of life and death, a war demanding perseverance, discipline, firmness, indomitableness and unity of will.

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not arise all at once. They are created only by prolonged effort and hard-won experience. Their creation is facilitated by correct revolutionary theory, which, in its turn, is not a dogma, but assumes final shape only in close connection with the practical activity of a truly mass and truly revolutionary movement.

That Bolshevism was able, in 1917-20, under unprecedentedly difficult conditions, to build up and successfully maintain the strictest centralization and iron discipline was simply due to a number of historical peculiarities of Russia.

On the one hand, Bolshevism arose in 1903 in the very firm foundation of the theory of Marxism. And the correctness of this—and only this—revolutionary theory has been proved not only by the experience of all countries throughout the nineteenth century, but particularly by the experience of the wanderings and vacillations, the mistakes and disappointments of revolutionary thought in Russia. For nearly half a century—approximately from the 'forties to the 'nineties—advanced thinkers in Russia, under the oppression of an unparalleled, savage and reactionary tsardom, eagerly sought for the correct revolutionary theory and followed each and every "last word" in Europe and America in this sphere with astonishing diligence and thoroughness. Russia achieved Marxism, the only correct revolutionary theory, veritably through *suffering*, by half a century of unprecedented torment and sacrifice, of unprecedented revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, testing in practice, disappointment, verification and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the enforced emigration caused by tsardom, revolutionary Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century possessed a wealth of international connections and excellent information about world forms and theories of the revolutionary movement such as no other country in the world possessed.

On the other hand, having arisen on this granite theoretical foundation, Bolshevism passed through fifteen years (1903-17) of practical history which in wealth of experience has had no equal anywhere else in the world. For no other country during these fifteen years had anything even approximating to this revolutionary experience, this rapid and varied succession of different forms of the movement—legal and illegal, peaceful

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## WHAT THE "FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE" ARE AND HOW THEY FIGHT THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS

(A REPLY TO ARTICLES IN *RUSSKOYE BOGATSTVO* OPPOSING  
THE MARXISTS.)

(Excerpt)

Generally speaking, the Russian Communists, the Russian adherents of Marxism, ought more than any others to call themselves SOCIAL-DEMOCRATS, and in their activities they must never forget the enormous importance of DEMOCRACY.<sup>1</sup>

In Russia, the remnants of mediaeval, semi-feudal institutions are still so very strong (as compared with Western Europe), they impose such a heavy yoke upon the proletariat and the people generally, retarding the growth of political thought in all ranks and classes, that one cannot refrain from insisting how tremendously important it is for the workers to combat all feudal institutions, absolutism, the system of social estates and the bureaucracy. It must be explained to the worker in the greatest detail what a terrible reactionary force these institutions are, how they intensify the oppression of labour by capital, how they degrade the labourers, how they maintain capital in its mediaeval forms, which, while not in the least, outdone by the modern, industrial forms in the exploitation of labour, supplement this exploitation by placing enormous difficulties in the way of the struggle for emancipation. The workers must

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"unite" all the revolutionary groups for the winning of political liberty.

This trend is rather peculiar and characteristic.

It is peculiar because the proposal for "unity" does not come from a definite group, or groups, with definite programs which coincide in one point or another. If it did, the question of unity could be decided in each separate case; it would be a concrete question that could be decided by the representatives of the uniting groups. Then there could be no special trend advocating "amalgamation." But there is such a trend, and it originates simply with people who have cut adrift from the old, and have not moored to anything new. The theory on which the fighters against absolutism have hitherto based themselves is obviously crumbling, and this is also destroying the conditions of solidarity and organization which are essential for the struggle. And so, these "amalgamators" and "unifiers" seem to think that the easiest way to create such a theory is to reduce it all to a protest against absolutism and a demand for political liberty, while evading all other questions, socialist and non-socialist. It goes without saying that this naive fallacy will inevitably be refuted at the very first attempts at such union.

But what makes this "amalgamation" trend characteristic is that it expresses one of the latest stages in that process of transformation of militant, revolutionary Narodism into political radical democracy, which I have tried to outline above. A durable amalgamation of all the non-Social-Democratic revolutionary groups under the banner mentioned will be possible only when a durable program of *democratic* demands has been drawn up that will put an end to the prejudices of the old Russian exceptionalism. Of course, the Social-Democrats believe that the formation of such a democratic party would be a useful forward step; and their work of opposing Narodism should further it, should further the eradication of all prejudices and myths, the grouping of all Socialists under the banner of Marxism and the formation of a democratic party by the other groups.

The Social-Democrats could not, of course, "amalgamate" with such a party, either, for they consider it necessary for the workers to organize into an independent workers' party; but

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political liberty will primarily serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and will not improve the conditions of the workers, but . . . only the conditions for their struggle . . . *against this very bourgeoisie*. I say this as against those Socialists who, while they do not accept the theory of the Social-Democrats, carry their agitation among the workers, having become convinced empirically that only among the latter are revolutionary elements to be found. The theory of these Socialists contradicts their practice, and they make the very serious mistake of distracting the workers from their direct task of ORGANIZING A SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY.<sup>1</sup>

This mistake arose naturally at a time when the class antagonisms of bourgeois society were as yet quite undeveloped, when they were held down by serfdom, when the latter gave rise to a unanimous protest and struggle on the part of the whole of the intelligentsia, which created the illusion that there was something peculiarly democratic about our intelligentsia, and that there was no profound gulf between the ideas of the liberals and those of the Socialists. Now, however, when economic development has advanced so far that even those who formerly denied that there was any soil for capitalism in Russia admit that it is precisely the capitalist path of development that we have entered, illusions on this score are no longer possible. The composition of the "intelligentsia" is coming to be just as clear as that of the society engaged in the production of material values: while the latter is ruled and governed by the capitalist, the "tone" in the former is set by the rapidly growing horde of careerists and bourgeois hirelings, and "intelligent-

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ristic acts against outstanding representatives of the autocracy as a method of political struggle.—*Ed.*

<sup>1</sup> There are two ways of arriving at the conclusion that the worker must be roused to fight absolutism: *either* by regarding the worker as the sole champion of the Socialist system, and political freedom, therefore, as one of the means of facilitating his struggle. That is the view of the Social-Democrats. *Or* by appealing to him simply as the man who suffers most from the present system, who has nothing more to lose and who can most determinedly take up the cudgels against absolutism. But that will mean compelling the worker to drag in the wake of the bourgeois radicals who refuse to see the antagonism between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie behind the solidarity of the whole "people" against absolutism.

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If you refuse to believe the florid talk about the "interests of the people" and try to delve deeper into the matter, you will find that you are dealing with the purest ideologists of the petty bourgeoisie, which dreams of improving, supporting and restoring its ("popular" in their jargon) husbandry by various innocent progressive measures, and which is totally incapable of understanding that, the relations of production being what they are, the only effect such progressive measures can have is to proletarianize the masses still more. We cannot but be grateful to the "friends of the people" for having done so much to reveal the class character of our intelligentsia and for thus having fortified the Marxists' theory that our small producers are petty-bourgeois. They must inevitably hasten the dissipation of the old illusions and myths that have so long confused the minds of the Russian Socialists. The "friends of the people" have so mauled, vulgarized and soiled these theories that the Russian Socialists who held them are confronted with the inexorable dilemma—either to revise them, or to abandon them altogether and leave them to the exclusive use of the gentlemen who with smug solemnity announce *urbi et orbi* that the rich peasants are buying implements, and who with serious mien assure us that we must welcome people who have grown weary of sitting around card tables. And in this strain they talk about a "popular system" and the "intelligentsia"—talk, not only with a serious air, but in pretentious, pompous phrases about broad ideals, about an ideal treatment of the problems of life!...

The Socialist intelligentsia can expect to perform fruitful work only when it abandons its illusions and begins to seek support in the actual, and not the desired development of Russia, in the actual, and not the possible economic relations of society. Moreover, its THEORETICAL work must be directed towards *the concrete study of all forms of economic antagonism in Russia, the study of their connections and sequence of development; it must disclose these antagonisms wherever they have been concealed by political history, by the peculiarities of legal systems or by established theoretical prejudices. It must present an integral picture of our conditions as a definite system of relations of production, it must show that the exploita-*

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is presumed that the task of Socialists is to seek "different [from the actual] paths of development" for the country, then, naturally, practical work becomes possible only when philosophical geniuses discover and indicate these "different paths"; and the discovery and indication of these paths will, in turn, mark the close of theoretical work, and the beginning of the work of those who are to direct the "fatherland" along the "newly discovered" "different paths." The position is altogether different when the task of the Socialists is understood to mean that they must be the ideological leaders of the proletariat in its actual struggle against actual and real enemies who pursue the *actual* path of social and economic development. In these circumstances, theoretical and practical work merge into one, which the veteran German Social-Democrat, Liebknecht, aptly described as:

*Studieren, Propagandieren, Organisieren.*<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to be an ideological leader without performing the above-mentioned theoretical work, just as it is impossible to be an ideological leader without directing this work to meet the requirements of the cause, and without propagating the results of this theory among the workers and helping them to organize.

Presenting the task in this way will guard Social-Democracy against the defects of dogmatism and sectarianism from which Socialist groups so often suffer.

There can be no dogmatism where the supreme and sole criterion of a doctrine is whether or not it conforms to the actual process of social and economic development; there can be no sectarianism when the task undertaken is to assist the organizing of the proletariat, and when, therefore, the role of the "intelligentsia" is to make special leaders from among the intelligentsia unnecessary.

Hence, notwithstanding the differences of opinion existing among Marxists on various theoretical questions, the methods of their political activity have remained unchanged ever since the group arose.

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of the whole exploited population. And in order that he may fulfil his function of representative in an organized and sustained struggle, it is not at all necessary to enthuse him with "perspectives"; all that is needed is *to make him understand his position*, to make him understand the political and economic structure of the system that oppresses him and the necessity and inevitability of class antagonism under this system. The position of the factory worker in the general system of capitalist relations makes him the sole fighter for the emancipation of the working class, for only the higher stage of development of capitalism, large-scale machine industry, creates the material conditions and the social forces necessary for this struggle. In all other places, where the forms of development of capitalism are low, these material conditions are absent: production is scattered among thousands of tiny enterprises (and they do not cease to be scattered *enterprises* even under the most equalitarian forms of communal landownership), the exploited for the most part still possess tiny enterprises, and are thus tied to the very bourgeois system they should be fighting: this retards and hinders the development of the social forces that are capable of overthrowing capitalism. Scattered, individual, petty exploitation binds the toilers to a particular place, disunites them, prevents them from appreciating their class solidarity, prevents them from uniting and understanding that the cause of their exploitation is not any particular individual, but the whole economic system. Large-scale capitalism, on the contrary, inevitably severs all the workers' ties with the old society, with a particular locality and a particular exploiter; it unites them, compels them to think and puts them in conditions which enable them to commence an organized struggle. Accordingly, it is on the working class that the Social-Democrats concentrate all their attention and all their activities. When its advanced representatives have mastered the ideas of scientific Socialism, the idea of the historical role of the Russian worker, when these ideas spread far and wide, and when there arise among the workers durable organizations which will transform the present sporadic economic war of the workers into a conscious class struggle—then the Russian WORKER, rising at the head of all the democratic elements, will overthrow absolut-

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omitting what is most essential in it; but when you are expounding only fragments how can you say that it is narrow?

That indeed, is the only reason for the curious fact, possible only in Russia, that people are counted Marxists who have no conception of the class struggle, of the antagonism necessarily inherent in capitalist society, and of the development of this antagonism; who have no idea of the revolutionary role of the proletariat; who even directly come forward with bourgeois projects, provided only they contain such catchwords as "money economy," its "necessity," and similar expressions, which to regard as specifically Marxist requires all the intellectual profundity of a Mr. Mikhailovsky.<sup>1</sup>

Marx on the other hand considered that the whole value of his theory lay in the fact that it is "by its very nature a critical<sup>2</sup> and revolutionary theory." And this latter quality is indeed completely and unconditionally characteristic of *Marxism*, for this theory directly sets out to *disclose* all the forms of antagonism and exploitation in modern society, to trace their evolution, demonstrate their transient character, the inevitability of their transformation into a different form, *and thus help the proletariat as quickly and easily as possible to put an end to all exploitation*. The irresistible attraction which draws the Socialists of all countries to this theory indeed lies in the fact that it is at one and the same time strictly and profoundly scientific (representing as it does the last word in social science) and revolutionary, and combines the two not by chance, not only because the founder of the doctrine combined in his own person the qualities of a scientist and a revolutionary, but *intrinsicly and inseparably, in the theory itself*. For, indeed, the purpose of theory, the aim of science, as directly laid down

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Now, however, there can be no doubt that this theory has lost credit, and the sooner Russian Socialists realize that with the present level of knowledge there can be no revolutionary theory except Marxism, the sooner they devote all their efforts to applying this theory to Russia, theoretically and practically—the surer and quicker will be the success of revolutionary work.

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class took part in revolutions. A reference to history will refute this opinion because, precisely in 1848, when the consolidation of Constitutions took place in the West, the working class consisted of the urban artisan element, represented urban democracy; a factory proletariat hardly existed, while the proletariat employed in large-scale industry (the German weavers—Hauptmann,<sup>1</sup> The Weavers of Lyons) represented a wild mass capable only of rioting, but not of advancing any political demands. It can be definitely stated that the Constitutions of 1848 were won by the bourgeoisie and the small urban artisans. On the other hand, the working class (artisans, manufactory workers, printers, weavers, watchmakers, etc.) have been accustomed since the Middle Ages to membership in organizations, in mutual aid societies, religious societies, etc. This spirit of organization is still alive among the skilled workers in the West and sharply distinguishes them from the factory proletariat who submit to organization badly and slowly and are capable only of forming *lose organisation* (temporary organizations) and not permanent organizations with rules and regulations. These skilled manufacturing labourers comprised the core of Social-Democratic parties. Thus, the following picture was obtained: on the one hand, relatively easy and complete opportunity for political struggle; on the other hand, the opportunity for the systematic organization of this struggle with the aid of the workers who had been trained in the manufacturing period. It was on this basis that theoretical and practical Marxism grew up in the West. The starting point was the parliamentary political struggle with the prospect—only superficially resembling Blanquism,<sup>2</sup> but of a totally different origin—with the prospect of capturing power, on the one hand, and of a *Zusammenbruch* (cataclysm) on the other. Marxism was the theoretical expression of the prevailing practice: of the political struggle which prevailed over the economic struggle. In Belgium and in France, but particularly in Germany, the workers organized the political struggle with incredible ease, but it was with enormous difficulty and tremendous friction that they organized the economic struggle. Even to this day the economic organizations compared with the political organizations (this does not apply to England), are extraordinarily weak and unstable, and everywhere *laissent à désirer quelque chose* (leave much to be desired). While the energy in the political struggle had not yet been completely exhausted, *Zusammenbruch* was an essential organizational *Schlagwort* (catchword) destined to play an extremely important historical rôle. The fundamental law that can be discerned in studying the labour

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to strengthen and crystallize the weak forces of the workers, in Russia, on the contrary, these weak forces are confronted with a wall of political oppression, and not only do they lack practical means of fighting this oppression, and hence, also of their own development, but they are systematically strangled and cannot even give forth weak shoots. If to this we add that the working class in our country has not inherited the spirit of organization which distinguished the fighters in the West, we get a gloomy picture, one that is likely to drive into despondency the most optimistic Marxist who believes that an extra factory chimney stack, by the very fact that it exists, will bring great prosperity. The economic struggle too is hard, infinitely hard, but it is possible to wage it, it is in fact being waged by the masses themselves. By learning to organize in the midst of this struggle, and coming into constant conflict with the political regime in the course of it, the Russian worker will at last create what may be called the form of a labour movement, the organization or organizations that will best conform to Russian conditions. At the present, it can be said with certainty that the Russian labour movement is still in the amœba state and has not yet created any form. The strike movement, which is going on with all types of organization, cannot yet be described as the crystallized form of the Russian movement, whereas the underground organizations are not worth consideration even from the mere quantitative point of view (quite apart from the question of their usefulness under present conditions).

"That is the situation. If to this we add the famine and the process of the ruination of the countryside, which give rise to the *Streikbrecherism*,<sup>1</sup> and, consequently, to even greater difficulties in the way of raising the masses of the workers to a more tolerable cultural level, then . . . well, what is there to do for the Russian Marxist? The talk about an independent workers' political party is nothing but the product of an attempt to transplant alien tasks and alien results to our soil. The Russian Marxist, so far, is a sad spectacle. His practical tasks at the present time are paltry, his theoretical knowledge, in so far as he utilizes it, *not as an instrument for research* but as a scheme for activity, is worthless for the purpose of fulfilling even those paltry practical tasks. Moreover, these horrowed schemes are harmful from the practical point of view. Our Marxists forget that the working class in the West entered the field of political activity after it had already been cleared, and, are too contemptuous of the radical or liberal opposition activity of all other non-labour strata of society. The slightest attempt to concentrate attention on public manifestations of a liberal political character rouses the protests of the orthodox Marxists who forget that a number of historical conditions prevent us from being Western Marxists and demand of us a different Marxism, applicable to and necessary for Russian conditions. Obviously, the fact that every Russian citizen lacks political feeling and sense cannot be compensated by talk about politics or by appeals to a non-existent power. This political sense can only be acquired by training, i.e., by parti-

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Furthermore, the authors of the *Credo* are utterly wrong in respect to the present state of the West European labour movement and to the theory of Marxism, under the banner of which that movement is marching. To talk about the "crisis of Marxism" is merely to repeat the nonsense of the bourgeois hacks who are doing all they can to exaggerate every disagreement among the Socialists and represent it as a split in the Socialist parties. The notorious Bernsteinism—in the sense in which it is understood by the general public, and by the authors of the *Credo* in particular—is an attempt to narrow the theory of Marxism, an attempt to convert the revolutionary workers' party into a reformist party; and, as was to be expected, this attempt has been strongly condemned by the majority of the German Social-Democrats. Opportunist trends have more than once revealed themselves in the ranks of German Social-Democracy, and on every occasion they have been repudiated by the Party, which loyally guards the principles of revolutionary international Social-Democracy. We are convinced that every attempt to transplant opportunist views to Russia will encounter an equally determined resistance on the part of the great majority of Russian Social-Democrats.

Similarly, there can be no suggestion of a "radical change in the practical activity" of the West European workers' parties, in spite of what the authors of the *Credo* say: the tremendous

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Still less can there be any suggestion of any serious change in the attitude of the workers' party towards the other opposition parties. In this respect, too, Marxism has mapped out the correct line, which is equally remote from exaggerating the importance of politics, from conspiracies (Blanquism, etc.) and from decrying politics or reducing it to opportunist reformist patching up of the social system (anarchism, utopian and petty-bourgeois socialism, state socialism, professorial socialism, etc.). The proletariat must strive to form independent political workers' parties, the main aim of which must be the capture of political power by the proletariat for the purpose of organizing Socialist society. The proletariat must not regard the other classes and parties as a "single reactionary mass"; on the contrary, it must take part in the whole of political and social life, support the progressive classes and parties against the reactionary classes and parties, support every revolutionary movement against the present system, champion the interests of every oppressed nation or race, of every persecuted religion, disfranchised sex, etc. The arguments the authors of the *Credo* advance on this subject merely reveal a desire to obscure the class character of the struggle of the proletariat, a desire to weaken this struggle by a senseless "recognition of society," to reduce revolutionary Marxism to a trivial reformist trend. We are convinced that the overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats will totally reject this distortion of the fundamental principles of Social-Democracy. Their incorrect premises regarding the West European labour movement led the authors of the *Credo* to draw still more erroneous "conclusions for Russia."

The assertion that the Russian working class "has not yet put forward political tasks" simply reveals ignorance of the Russian revolutionary movement. Even the Northern Russian Workers' Union formed in 1878 and the South Russian Workers' Union formed in 1879 put forward the demand for political liberty in their program. After the reaction of the 'eighties, the working class repeatedly put forward the same demand in the 'nineties. The assertion that "the talk about an independent workers' political party is nothing but the product of an attempt to transplant alien tasks and alien results to our soil"

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*Rabochaya Mysl* [Workers' Thought] seemed to incline toward the ideas of the authors of the *Credo* and in the leading article on its program (in issue No. 1, Oct. 1897) it, regrettably, expressed the utterly erroneous idea, which runs counter to Social-Democracy, that the "economic basis of the movement" may be "obscured by the effort constantly to keep in mind political ideals." At the same time, however, another St. Petersburg workers' newspaper, the *St. Peterburgski Rabochy Listok* [St. Petersburg Workers' Paper] (No. 2, Sept. 1897) emphatically expressed the opinion that "the overthrow of the autocracy . . . can be achieved only by a well organized and numerically strong workers' party" and that "organized in a strong party" the workers will "emancipate themselves, and the whole of Russia, from all political and economic oppression." A third newspaper, the *Rabochaya Gazeta* [Workers' Gazette], in its leading article in issue No. 2 (Nov. 1897), wrote: "The fight against the autocratic government for political liberty is the immediate task of the Russian labour movement." "The Russian labour movement will increase its forces tenfold if it comes out as a single, harmonious whole, with a common name and a well-knit organization. . . ." "The separate workers' circles should combine into a single, common party." "The Russian workers' party will be a Social-Democratic Party." That the overwhelming majority of Russian Social-Democrats fully share the views expressed by *Rabochaya Gazeta* is seen from the fact that the Congress of Russian Social-Democrats which was held in the spring of 1898 formed the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, published its Manifesto and recognized the *Rabochaya Gazeta* as the official organ of the Party. Thus, the authors of the *Credo* are retreating an enormous distance from the stage of development which Russian Social-Democracy has already achieved and recorded in the *Manifesto of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party*. If, as the result of desperate persecution by the Russian government, the activities of the Party have at the present time temporarily subsided and its official organ is no longer appearing, the task of all Social-Democrats is to exert every effort finally to consolidate the Party, to draw up the Party program and to revive its official organ. In view of the wavering of opinion evidenced by the

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We invite all groups of Social-Democrats and all workers' circles in Russia to discuss the above-quoted *Credo* and our resolution, and to express a definite opinion on the question raised, in order that all differences may be removed and in order that the work of organizing and strengthening the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party may be accelerated.

Groups and circles may send their resolutions to the League of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad which, on the basis of point 10 of the decision of the Congress of Russian Social-Democrats held in 1898, is a part of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and its representative abroad.

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And we now ask: Has anything new been introduced into this theory by its loud-voiced "renovators" who have raised so much noise in our day and have grouped themselves around the German Socialist Bernstein? *Absolutely nothing.* They have not advanced one single step the science which Marx and Engels enjoined us to develop; they have not taught the proletariat any new methods of struggle; they have only retreated, borrowing fragments of backward theories and preaching to the proletariat not the theory of struggle but the theory of cession, cession to the most vicious enemies of the proletariat—the governments and bourgeois parties—who never cease to seek for new means of baiting the Socialists. Plekhanov, one of the founders and leaders of Russian Social-Democracy, was absolutely right in mercilessly criticizing the latest "criticism" by Bernstein, whose views have now been rejected by the representatives of the German workers as well (at the Hanover Congress).

We know that a flood of accusations will be showered on us for these words; they will cry that we want to convert the Socialist Party into an order of "true believers" which persecutes "heretics" for deviations from "dogma," for every independent opinion, and so forth. We are acquainted with all these fashionable and trenchant phrases. Only there is not a grain of truth or sense in them. There cannot be a strong Socialist Party without a revolutionary theory which unites all Socialists, from which they draw all their convictions, and which they apply in their methods of struggle and means of action. To defend such a theory, which to the best of your knowledge you consider to be true, against unfounded attacks and attempts to vitiate it, does not imply that you are an enemy of *all* criticism. We do not regard Marx's theory as something final and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the cornerstones of the science which Socialists *must* advance in all directions if they do not want to lag behind

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the Russian government, too, will succeed in undertaking something of the kind, as it has always endeavoured to throw some paltry sops or, rather, sham grants to the people, only to turn their thoughts away from the fact that they are oppressed and are without rights. No economic struggle can give the workers a substantial improvement, it cannot, even, be conducted on a large scale unless the workers have the right freely to organize meetings, unions, have their own newspapers and send their representatives to the national assemblies, as do the workers in Germany and all the other European countries (with the exception of Turkey and Russia). But in order to win these rights it is necessary to wage a *political struggle*. In Russia, not only the workers, but all citizens are deprived of political rights. Russia is an absolute monarchy, unrestricted by any limitations. The tsar alone promulgates laws, appoints officials and controls them. For this reason, *it seems* as though in Russia the tsar and the tsarist government are independent of any classes and accord equal treatment to all. In *reality*, however, all the officials are chosen exclusively from the possessing class and all are subject to the influence of the large capitalists who make the ministers dance to their tune and achieve whatever they want. The Russian working class is burdened by a double yoke; it is robbed and plundered by the capitalists and the landowners, and to prevent it from fighting it is bound hand and foot by the police, it is gagged and every attempt to defend the rights of the people is followed by persecution. Every strike against a capitalist results in the military and police being let loose on the workers. Every economic struggle of necessity turns into a political struggle, and Social-Democracy must indissolubly combine the one with the other into a *single class struggle of the proletariat*. The first and the chief aim of such a struggle must be the conquest of political rights, *the conquest of political liberty*. If the workers of St. Petersburg alone, with the scant support of the Socialists, have rapidly succeeded in wringing concessions from the government—the passing of a law reducing the working day—the Russian working class as a whole, led by a united “Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party” will be able, by waging a per-

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# WHAT IS TO BE DONE?

## BURNING QUESTIONS OF OUR MOVEMENT

(*Excerpt*)

### I. DOGMATISM AND "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"

#### A. WHAT IS "FREEDOM OF CRITICISM"?

"Freedom of criticism," this undoubtedly is the most fashionable slogan at the present time, and the one most frequently employed in the controversies between the Socialists and democrats of all countries. At first sight, nothing would appear to be more strange than the solemn appeals by one of the parties to the dispute for freedom of criticism. Have voices been raised in some of the advanced parties against the constitutional law of the majority of European countries which guarantees freedom to science and scientific investigation? "Something must be wrong here," an onlooker, who has not yet fully appreciated the nature of the disagreements among the controversialists, will say when he hears this fashionable slogan repeated at every cross-road "Evidently this slogan is one of the conventional phrases which, like a nickname, becomes legitimized by use, and becomes almost an appellative," he will conclude.

In fact, it is no secret that two separate tendencies have been formed in present-day international Social-Democracy.<sup>1</sup>

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of all the fundamental ideas of Marxism. As this criticism of Marxism has been going on for a long time now, from the political platform, from university chairs, in numerous pamphlets and in a number of scientific works, as the younger generation of the educated classes has been systematically trained for decades on this criticism, it is not surprising that the "new, critical" tendency in Social-Democracy should spring up, all complete, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter. The content of this new tendency did not have to grow and develop, it was transferred bodily from bourgeois literature to Socialist literature.

To proceed. If Bernstein's theoretical criticism and political yearnings are still obscure to anyone, the French have taken the trouble to demonstrate the "new method." In this instance, also, France has justified its old reputation as the country in which "more than anywhere else, the historical class struggles were each time fought out to a decision..." (Engels, in his introduction to Marx's *The Eighteenth Brumaire*.) The French Socialists have begun, not to theorize, but to act. The more developed democratic political conditions in France have permitted them to put "Bernsteinism into practice" immediately, with all its consequences. Millerand has provided an excellent example of practical Bernsteinism; not without reason did Bernstein and Vollmar rush so zealously to defend and praise him! Indeed, if Social-Democracy, in essence, is merely a reformist party, and must be bold enough to admit this openly, then not only has a Socialist the right to join a bourgeois cabinet, it is even his duty always to strive to do so. If democracy, in essence, means the abolition of class domination, then why should not a Socialist minister charm the whole bourgeois world by orations on class collaboration? Why should he not remain in the cabinet even after the shooting down of workers by gendarmes has exposed, for the hundredth and thousandth time, the real nature of the democratic co-operation of classes?... And the reward for this utter humiliation and self-degradation of Socialism in the face of the whole world, for the corruption of the Socialist consciousness of the working class—the only basis that can guarantee our victory—the reward for this is imposing *plans* for niggardly reforms, so nig-

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let go of our hands, don't clutch at us and don't besmirch the grand word "freedom"; for we too are "free" to go where we please, free not only to fight against the marsh, but also against those who are turning towards the marsh.

#### D. ENGELS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE THEORETICAL STRUGGLE

"Dogmatism, doctrinairism." "ossification of the Party—the inevitable retribution that follows the violent strait-lacing of thought"—these are the enemies which the knightly champions of "freedom of criticism" rise up in arms against in *Rabocheye Dyelo*. We are very glad that this question has been brought up and we would only propose to add to it another question: Who are the judges?

Before us lie two publisher's announcements. One, *The Program of the Periodical Organ of the Union of Russian Social-Democrats—Rabocheye Dyelo* (reprint from No. 1 of *Rabocheye Dyelo*), and the other an announcement of the resumption of the publications of the "Emancipation of Labour Group." Both are dated 1899, a time when the "crisis of Marxism" had long since been under discussion. And what do we find? You would seek in vain in the first publication for any reference to this phenomenon, or a definite statement of the position the new organ intends to adopt on this question. Of theoretical work and the urgent tasks that now confront it not a word is said either in this program or in the supplements to it that were passed by the Third Congress of the Union in 1901 (*Two Congresses*, pp. 15-18). During the whole of this time the editorial board of *Rabocheye Dyelo* ignored theoretical questions, in spite of the fact that these questions were agitating the minds of all Social-Democrats all over the world.

The other announcement, on the contrary, first of all points to the diminution of interest in theory observed in recent years, imperatively demands "vigilant attention to the theoretical side of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat," and calls for "ruthless criticism of the Bernsteinian and other anti-revolutionary tendencies" in our movement. The issues of *Zarya* that have appeared show how this program has been carried out.

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Secondly, the Social-Democratic movement is essentially international. This does not merely mean that we must combat national chauvinism, but also that a movement that is starting in a young country can be successful only if it assimilates the experience of other countries. And in order to assimilate this experience, it is not enough merely to be acquainted with it, or simply to transcribe the latest resolutions. This requires the ability to treat this experience critically and to test it independently. Anybody who realizes how enormously the modern labour movement has grown and become ramified will understand what an amount of theoretical force and political (as well as revolutionary) experience is needed to fulfil this task.

Thirdly, the national tasks of Russian Social-Democracy are such as have never confronted any other Socialist Party in the world. Further on we shall have occasion to deal with the political and organizational duties which the task of emancipating the whole people from the yoke of autocracy imposes upon us. At the moment, we only wish to state that *the role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory*. In order to understand what this means at all concretely, let the reader recall predecessors of Russian Social-Democracy like Herzen, Belinsky Chernyshevsky and the brilliant galaxy of revolutionaries of the 'seventies; let him ponder over the world significance which Russian literature is now acquiring, let him ... but that is enough!

Let us quote what Engels said in 1874 concerning the significance of theory in the Social-Democratic movement. Engels recognizes *not two* forms of the great struggle of Social-Democracy (political and economic), as is the fashion among us, *but three, adding to the first two the theoretical struggle*. His recommendations to the German labour movement, which had

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"It is due to this advantageous situation on the one hand, to the insular peculiarities of the English and to the forcible suppression of the French movement on the other, that the German workers have for the moment been placed in the vanguard of the proletarian struggle. How long events will allow them to occupy this post of honour cannot be foretold. But as long as they occupy it, let us hope that they will fill it in a fitting manner. This demands redoubled efforts in every field of struggle and agitation. It is in particular the duty of the leaders to gain an ever clearer insight into all theoretical questions, to free themselves more and more from the influence of traditional phrases inherited from the old world outlook, and constantly to keep in mind that Socialism, since it has become a science, must be pursued as a science, *i. e.*, it must be studied. The task will be to spread with increased zeal among the masses of the workers the ever clearer insight, thus acquired, to knit together ever more firmly the organization both of the party and of the trade unions.... If the German workers proceed in this way, they will not be marching exactly at the head of the movement—it is not at all in the interest of this movement that the workers of any one country should march at its head—but they will occupy an honourable place in the battle line, and they will stand armed for battle when either unexpectedly grave trials or momentous events will demand from them heightened courage, heightened determination and the power to act."

Engels' words proved prophetic. Within a few years the German workers were subjected to unexpectedly grave trials in the form of the Anti-Socialist Law. And the German workers really met them armed for battle and succeeded in emerging from them in triumph.

The Russian proletariat will have to undergo trials immeasurably more grave; it will have to fight a monster compared with which the Anti-Socialist Law in a constitutional country seems but a pigmy. History has now confronted us with an immediate task which is the *most revolutionary* of all the *immediate* tasks that confront the proletariat of any country. The fulfilment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful bulwark, not only of European but also (it may now be said) of Asiatic reaction would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat. And we are right in counting upon acquiring this honourable title already earned by our predecessors, the revolutionaries of the 'seventies, if we succeed in inspiring our movement—which is a thousand times broader and deeper—with the same devoted determination and vigour.

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We said that *there could not yet be* Social-Democratic consciousness among the workers. This consciousness could only be brought to them from without. The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, *i. e.*, it may itself realize the necessity for combining in unions, for fighting against the employers and for striving to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc.<sup>1</sup> The theory of Socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. According to their social status, the founders of modern scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia. Similarly, in Russia, the theoretical doctrine of Social-Democracy arose quite independently of the spontaneous growth of the labour movement; it arose as a natural and inevitable outcome of the development of ideas among the revolutionary Socialist intelligentsia. At the time of which we are speaking, *i. e.*, the middle of the 'nineties, this doctrine not only represented the completely formulated program of the "Emancipation of Labour Group," but had already won the adherence of the majority of the revolutionary youth in Russia.

Hence, simultaneously, we had both the spontaneous awakening of the masses of the workers, the awakening to con-

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<sup>1</sup> "*Iskra*, which adopts a hostile attitude towards the activities of the Social-Democrats of the end of the 'nineties, ignores the fact that at that time the conditions for any other kind of work except fighting for petty demands were absent," declare the Economists in their *Letter to Russian Social-Democratic Organs*. (*Iskra*, No. 12.) The facts quoted above show that the statement about "absent conditions" is the very opposite of the truth. Not only at the end, but even in the middle of the 'nineties, all the conditions existed for other work, besides fighting for petty demands, all the conditions—except the sufficient training of the leaders. Instead of frankly admitting our, the ideologists, the leaders', lack of sufficient training—the "Economists" try to throw the blame entirely upon the "absent condi-

ample, a letter on the assault on the workers in the Yaroslavl Province). This, if we are not mistaken, "first attempt" of the Russian Social-Democrats of the 'nineties was not a narrow, local, and certainly not an "economic" newspaper, but one that aimed to unite the strike movement with the revolutionary movement against the autocracy, and to win all the victims of oppression and political and reactionary obscurantism over to the side of Social-Democracy. No one in the slightest degree acquainted with the state of the movement at that period could doubt that such a paper would have been fully approved of by the workers of the capital and the revolutionary intelligentsia and would have had a wide circulation. The failure of the enterprise merely showed that the Social-Democrats of that time were unable to meet the immediate requirements of the time owing to their lack of revolutionary experience and practical training. The same thing must be said with regard to the *St. Petersburg Rabochy Listok* and particularly with regard to *Rabochaya Gazeta* and the *Manifesto* of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party which was established in the spring of 1898. Of course, we would not dream of blaming the Social-Democrats of that time for this unpreparedness. But in order to obtain the benefit of the experience of that movement, and to draw practical lessons from it, we must thoroughly understand the causes and significance of this or that shortcoming. For that reason it is extremely important to establish the fact that part (perhaps even a majority) of the Social-Democrats, operating in the period of 1895-98, quite justly considered it possible even then, at the very beginning of the "spontaneous" movement, to come forward with a most extensive program and fighting tactics.<sup>1</sup> The lack of training of

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<sup>1</sup> "*Iskra*, which adopts a hostile attitude towards the activities of the Social-Democrats of the end of the 'nineties, ignores the fact that at that time the conditions for any other kind of work except fighting for petty demands were absent," declare the Economists in their *Letter to Russian Social-Democratic Organs*. (*Iskra*, No. 12.) The facts quoted above show that the statement about "absent conditions" is the very opposite of the truth. Not only at the end, but even in the middle of the 'nineties, all the conditions existed for other work, besides fighting for petty demands, all the conditions—except the sufficient training of the leaders. Instead of frankly admitting our, the ideologists, the leaders', lack of sufficient training—the "Economists" try to throw the blame entirely upon, the "absent condi-

question of organization, and particularly around the "rules for a workers' benefit fund," which, in their final form, were published in *Listok Rabotnika (Workingman's Sheet)*, No. 9-10, p. 46. Sharp differences were immediately revealed between the "old" members ("Decembrists," as the St. Petersburg Social-Democrats jestingly called them) and several of the "young" members (who subsequently actively collaborated on the *Rabochaya Mysl*), and a very heated discussion ensued. The "young" members defended the main principles of the rules in the form in which they were published. The "old" members said that this was not what was wanted, that first of all it was necessary to consolidate the "League of Struggle" into an organization of revolutionaries which should have control of all the various workers' benefit funds, students' propaganda circles, etc. It goes without saying that the controversialists had no suspicion at that time that these disagreements were the beginning of a divergence; on the contrary, they regarded them as being of an isolated and casual nature. But this fact shows that "Economism" did not arise and spread in Russia without a fight on the part of the "old" Social-Democrats (the Economists of today are apt to forget this). And if, in the main, this struggle has not left "documentary" traces behind it, it is *solely* because the membership of the circles working at that time underwent such constant change that no continuity was established and, consequently, differences were not recorded in any documents.

The appearance of *Rabochaya Mysl* brought Economism to the light of day, but not all at once. We must picture to ourselves concretely the conditions of the work and the short-lived character of the majority of the Russian circles (and only those who have experienced this can have any exact idea of it), in order to understand how much there was accidental in the successes and failures of the new tendency in various towns, and why for a long time neither the advocates nor the opponents of this "new" tendency could make up their minds—indeed they had no opportunity to do so—as to whether this was really a new tendency or whether it was merely an expression of the lack of training of certain individuals. For example, the first mimeographed copies of *Rabochaya Mysl* never reached the

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ers." It was declared that strike funds "are more valuable for the movement than a hundred other organizations" (compare this statement made in October 1897 with the controversy between the "Decembrists" and the young members in the beginning of 1897), and so forth. Catchwords like: "We must concentrate not on the 'cream' of the workers, but on the 'average,' mass worker"; "Politics always obediently follows economics,"<sup>1</sup> etc., etc., became the fashion, and exercised an irresistible influence upon the masses of the youth who were attracted to the movement, but who, in the majority of cases, were acquainted only with legally expounded fragments of Marxism.

Consciousness was completely overwhelmed by spontaneity—the spontaneity of the "Social-Democrats" who repeated Mr. V. V.'s<sup>2</sup> "ideas," the spontaneity of those workers who were carried away by the arguments that a kopek added to a ruble was worth more than Socialism and politics, and that they must "fight, knowing that they are fighting not for some future generation, but for themselves and their children." (Leading article in *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1.) Phrases like these have always been the favourite weapons of the West European bourgeoisie, who, while hating Socialism, strove (like the German "*Social-Politiker*" Hirsch)<sup>3</sup> to transplant English trade unionism to their own soil and to preach to the workers that the purely trade union struggle<sup>4</sup> is the struggle for themselves and for their children, and not the struggle for some kind of

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"Many of our revisionist critics believe that Marx asserted that economic development and the class struggle create not only the conditions for Socialist production, but also, and directly, the *consciousness* [K. K.'s italics] of its necessity. And these critics advance the argument that the most highly capitalistically developed country, England, is more remote than any other from this consciousness. Judging from the draft, one might assume that the committee which drafted the Austrian program shared this alleged orthodox-Marxian view which is thus refuted. In the draft program it is stated: The more capitalist development increases the numbers of the proletariat, the more the proletariat is compelled and becomes fit to fight against capitalism. The proletariat becomes conscious of the possibility of and necessity for Socialism. In this connection Socialist consciousness is represented as a necessary and direct result of the proletarian

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Recall the example of Germany. What was the historical service Lassalle rendered to the German labour movement? It was that he diverted that movement from the path of trade unionism and co-operation preached by the Progressives along which it had been travelling spontaneously (*with the benign*

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Thirdly, the first number of *Rabochaya Mysl* shows that the term "Economism" (which, of course, we do not propose to abandon because this appellation has more or less established itself) does not adequately convey the real character of the new tendency. *Rabochaya Mysl* does not altogether repudiate the political struggle: the rules for a workers' benefit fund published in *Rabochaya Mysl*, No. 1, contains a reference to fighting against the government. *Rabochaya Mysl* believes, however, that "politics always obediently follows economics" (and *Rabocheye Dyelo* gives a variation of this thesis when, in its program, it asserts that "in Russia more than in any other country, the economic struggle is inseparable from the political struggle"). If by politics is meant Social-Democratic politics, then the postulates advanced by *Rabochaya Mysl* and *Rabocheye Dyelo* are absolutely wrong. The economic struggle of the workers is very often connected (although not inseparably) with bourgeois politics, clerical politics, etc., as we have already seen. If by politics is meant trade union politics, i.e., the common striving of all workers to secure from the government measures for the alleviation of the distress characteristic of their position, but which do not abolish that position, i.e., which do not remove the subjection of labour to capital, then *Rabocheye Dyelo's* postulate is correct. That striving indeed is common to the British trade unionists who are hostile to Socialism, to the Catholic workers, to the "Zubatov" workers, etc. There are politics and politics. Thus, we see that *Rabochaya Mysl* does not so much deny the political struggle as bow to

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# ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

## THE CRISIS IN OUR PARTY

*(Excerpt)*

### R. A FEW WORDS ON DIALECTICS. TWO REVOLUTIONS

A general glance at the development of our Party crisis will readily show that in the main, with minor exceptions, the composition of the two contending sides remained unchanged throughout. It was a struggle between the revolutionary wing and the opportunist wing in our Party. But this struggle passed through the most varied stages, and anyone who wants to understand the vast amount of literature that has already been accumulated, the mass of fragmentary evidence, passages torn from their context, isolated accusations, and so on and so forth, must thoroughly familiarize himself with the peculiarities of each of these stages.

In each of these stages the circumstances of the struggle and the immediate object of attack are essentially different; each stage is, as it were, a separate battle in one general military campaign. Our struggle cannot be understood at all unless the concrete circumstances of each battle are studied.<sup>1</sup> But once

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<sup>1</sup> Lenin has in mind the fierce dispute that arose at the Second Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party over the formulation of § 1 of the Party Rules on Party membership. Lenin's draft read: "A Party member is one who accepts its program, renders it financial support and belongs to one of the Party organizations."

Whereas Lenin fought for a monolithic militant Party, the formulation proposed by Martov threw the door of the Party open to the unstable, non-proletarian elements. The Second Congress adopted Martov's formula-

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The outcome of the dialectical development of our Party struggle has been two revolutions. The Party Congress was a real revolution, as Comrade Martov justly remarked in his "Once More in the Minority." The wits of the minority are also right when they say: "The world moves in revolutions; well, we have made a revolution!" They did indeed make a revolution after the Congress; and it is true, too, that generally speaking the world does move in revolutions. But the concrete significance of each concrete revolution is not defined by this general aphorism; there are revolutions which are more like reaction, to paraphrase the unforgettable expression of the unforgettable Comrade Makhov. We must know whether it was the revolutionary wing or the opportunist wing of the Party which was the actual force that made the revolution, we must know whether it was revolutionary or opportunist principles that inspired the fighters, before we can determine whether the "world" (our Party) was moved forward or backward by any concrete revolution.

Our Party Congress was unique and unprecedented in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement. For the first time a secret revolutionary party succeeded in emerging from the darkness of underground life into broad daylight, displaying to the world the whole course and outcome of the struggle within our Party, the whole nature of our Party and of each of its more or less noticeable sections in relation to program, tactics and organization. For the first time we succeeded in throwing off the traditions of circle looseness and revolutionary philistinism, in bringing together dozens of the most varied groups, many of which had been fiercely warring among themselves and had been linked together solely by the force of an idea and were prepared (in principle, that is) to sacrifice all their group aloofness and group independence for the sake of the great whole which we were for the first time actually creat-

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to conceal the victory of the circle spirit over the Party spirit. It pharisaically condemns splits, as if one can imagine any way of avoiding splits in any at all organized party except by the subordination of the minority to the majority. It says that heed must be paid to revolutionary public opinion, yet, while keeping dark the praises of the Akimovs, it indulges in petty scandal-mongering about the committees of the revolutionary wing of the Party! How shameful! How they have disgraced our old *Iskra*!

One step forward, two steps back. . . . It happens in the lives of individuals, and it happens in the history of nations and in the development of parties. It would be criminal cowardice to doubt even for a moment the inevitable and complete triumph of the principles of revolutionary Social-Democracy, of proletarian organization and Party discipline. We have already won a great deal, and we must go on fighting, undeterred by reverses, fighting steadfastly, scorning the philistine methods of circle scrapping, doing our very utmost to preserve the single party tie among all the Russian Social-Democrats which has been established at the cost of so much effort, and striving by dint of stubborn and systematic work to make all Party members, and the workers in particular, fully and intelligently acquainted with the duties of Party members, with the struggle at the Second Party Congress, with all the causes and all the stages of our disagreements, and with the utter disastrousness of opportunism, which, in the sphere of organization, as in the sphere of our program and our tactics, helplessly surrenders to the bourgeois psychology, uncritically adopts the point of view of bourgeois democracy, and blunts the weapon of the class struggle of the proletariat.

In its struggle for power the proletariat has no other weapon but organization. Disunited by the rule of anarchic competition in the bourgeois world, ground down by forced labour for capital, constantly thrust back to the "lower depths" of utter destitution, savagery and degeneration, the proletariat can become, and inevitably will become, an invincible force only when its ideological unification by the principles of Marxism is consolidated by the material unity of an organization which will weld millions of toilers into an army of the working class.

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## MARX ON THE AMERICAN "BLACK REDISTRIBUTION"

In No. 12 of *Vperyod* mention was made of an article by Marx on the agrarian question in opposition to Kriege. This was not in 1848, as is erroneously stated in the article by Comrade. . . , but in 1846. Hermann Kriege, a collaborator of Marx and at that time a very young man, went to America in 1845 and established a journal there, the *Volkstribun* (*People's Tribune*), for the propaganda of Communism. But he conducted this propaganda in such a way that Marx was obliged to protest very strongly in the name of the German Communists against the manner in which Hermann Kriege was discrediting the Communist Party. The criticism of Kriege's trend published in 1846 in the *Westphälisches Dampfboot*<sup>1</sup> and reprinted in Volume II of Mehring's edition of Marx's works is of enormous interest for present-day Russian Social-Democrats.

The point is that at that time the agrarian question was being brought to the forefront by the very progress of the American social movement, just as it is being brought to the forefront in Russia at the present time, and the question precisely at issue was not developed capitalist society, but the creation of the primary and fundamental conditions for the proper development of capitalism. This latter circumstance is of particular importance in drawing a parallel between Marx's attitude towards the American ideas of "black redistribution" and the attitude of Russian Social-Democrats to the present peasant movement.<sup>2</sup>

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and progressive content of a movement of the ideological tinsel which clothed it. In the second part of his criticism entitled "The Economics [i.e., the political economy] of the *People's Tribune* and Its Attitude to Young America," Marx writes:

"We fully recognize the historical justification of the movement of the American National Reformers. We know that this movement strives to attain results which, it is true, would temporarily further the industrialization of modern bourgeois society, but which, as the fruit of the proletarian movement, as an attack on landed property in general, especially under the conditions prevailing in America, must eventually, by its own consequences, lead to Communism. Kriege, who, with the German Communists in New York, joined the anti-rent movement, clothes this simple fact in bombastic phrases without even troubling about the content of movement itself and thereby proves that he is very unclear about the connection between young America and American conditions. We will quote another example of how he pours out his enthusiasm for humanity over a parcelling out of the land on an American scale suitable to the agrarians.

"In No. 10 [of *People's Tribune*], in an article entitled 'What We Want,' it is stated: 'The American National Reformers call the land the common heritage of all men—and demand that the national legislature pass measures to preserve the 1,400,000,000 acres of land that have not yet fallen into the hands of the grabbing speculators as the inalienable common property of the whole of mankind.' In order to preserve this 'common heritage,' this 'inalienable common property' for the whole of mankind he accepts the plan of the National Reformers: 'to provide every peasant, whatever his country of origin, with 160 acres of American land for his subsistence'; or as it is expressed in No. 14, 'An Answer to Conze': 'of this still untouched property of the people nobody is to take possession of more than 160 acres, and this only on condition that he cultivates them himself.' The land is thus to be preserved as 'inalienable common property,' and for 'the whole of mankind' at that, by immediately starting to share it out. Kriege moreover imagines that he can avert the necessary consequences of this division—concentration, industrial progress,

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1848 by the German police-bourgeois historians, and even more widely by German university-professorial historiography). It is the task of reaction to get the people to forget the forms of struggle, the forms of organization and the ideas and slogans that were engendered by the revolutionary period in such profusion and variety. Just as those obtuse eulogists of English philistinism, the Webbs, try to represent Chartism, the revolutionary period of the English labour movement, as pure childishness, as "sowing wild oats," as a piece of naïveté unworthy of serious attention, as an accidental and abnormal deviation, so the German bourgeois historians treat the year 1848 in Germany. Such also is the attitude of the reactionaries to the Great French Revolution, which to this day reveals the vitality and strength of its influence on humanity by the fact that it still inspires the most savage hatred. And in the same way our heroes of counter-revolution, particularly former "democrats" like Struve, Milyukov, Kizeveller and "*tutti quanti*,"<sup>1</sup> vie with each other in vilely slandering the revolutionary traditions of the Russian Revolution. Barely two years have elapsed since the direct mass struggle of the proletariat won the particle of freedom over which the liberal lackeys of the old regime are so rapturous, yet in our publicist literature a strong trend has already arisen which calls itself *liberal* (!!), which is fostered in the Cadet press and which is wholly devoted to depicting our revolution, revolutionary methods of struggle, revolutionary slogans and revolutionary traditions as something base, primitive, naïve, elemental, mad, etc. . . . and even criminal . . . from Milyukov to Kamyshansky *il n'y a qu'un pas!*<sup>2</sup> On the other hand the successes of reaction, which first drove the people from the Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies to the Dubasov-Stolypin Duma<sup>3</sup> and is now driving it to the Octobrist Duma, seem to the heroes of Russian liberalism to be "the process of growth of *constitutional* consciousness in Russia."

It is undoubtedly the duty of Russian Social-Democrats to

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tions of a direct and aggressive struggle against the old society; but it is another thing to repeat a slogan which is torn from the ensemble of conditions that gave rise to it and guaranteed its success and to apply it to fundamentally different conditions.

Marx himself, who valued revolutionary traditions so highly, and unmercifully castigated a renegade or philistine attitude towards them, at the same time demanded that revolutionaries should be able to *think*, should be able to *analyse* the conditions for the application of old methods of struggle, and not simply to repeat certain slogans. The "national" traditions of 1792 in France will perhaps forever remain a *model* of certain revolutionary methods of struggle; but this did not prevent Marx in 1870, in the famous Address of the International, from warning the French proletariat against the mistake of transferring those traditions to the conditions of a different period.

The same is true in Russia. We must study the conditions for the application of the boycott; we must instill in the masses the idea that the boycott is an entirely legitimate and sometimes essential method at moments when the revolution is on the rise (no matter what the pedants who take the name of Marx in vain say). But whether revolution is really on the rise—which is the fundamental condition for proclaiming a boycott—is a question which one must be able to raise independently and to decide on the basis of a serious analysis of the facts. It is our duty to prepare the way for such a rise, as far as it lies within our power, and not to renounce the boycott at the proper moment for boycott; but to regard the boycott slogan as being generally applicable to every bad or very bad representative institution would certainly be a mistake.

Take the argument that was used in defence and support of the boycott in the "days of freedom," and you will immediately realize the impossibility of simply transferring these arguments to present-day conditions.

When advocating the boycott in 1905 and the beginning of 1906 we argued that participation in the elections would tend to dampen ardour, to surrender the position to the enemy, to lead the revolutionary people astray, to facilitate an agreement between tsarism and the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie,

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the significance of the Duma and swollen with the consciousness of the grandeur of work in the Duma. The second is simple, concise, sober and modest. The first resolution expresses a spirit of philistine rejoicing over the union of Social-Democracy and constitutionalism ("the new power that has arisen from the womb of the people," and so on and so forth in this same false, stereotyped spirit). The second resolution can be paraphrased approximately as follows: since the accursed counter-revolution has driven us into this accursed pigsty, let us work even there for the benefit of the revolution, without whining, but also without boasting.

By defending the Duma from the boycott when we were still in the period of direct revolutionary struggle, the Mensheviks, as it were, gave their pledge to the people that the Duma would be something in the nature of a weapon of the revolution. And they have most solemnly come a cropper over this pledge. But if we Bolsheviks gave any pledge at all, it was by asserting that the Duma was the offspring of counter-revolution and that no real good could be expected from it. Our view has been splendidly confirmed so far, and it can be safely asserted that it will continue to be confirmed by future events. Unless the October-December strategy is "corrected" and repeated on the basis of the new data, there will never be freedom in Russia.

Therefore, when I am told that the Third Duma cannot be utilized as the Second Duma was, that the masses cannot be made to understand that it is necessary to take part in it, I want to answer: if by "utilize" is meant Menshevik bombast, in the nature of a weapon of the revolution, etc., then it certainly cannot. But then even the first two Dumas proved in fact to be steps to the Octobrist Duma, and yet we utilized them for a simple and modest<sup>1</sup> purpose (propaganda and agitation, criticism and explaining to the masses what is taking place), for which we shall always be able to utilize even the worst

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## VII

To sum up. The slogan of the boycott arose during a special historical period. In 1905 and the beginning of 1906 the objective state of affairs confronted the combatant social forces with the problem of choosing the immediate path: a direct revolutionary path or a change to a constitutional monarchy. The meaning of the agitation for a boycott was mainly to combat constitutional illusions. The condition for the success of the boycott movement was a wide, general, rapid and powerful rise of the revolution.

In all these respects the state of affairs now, towards the autumn of 1907, does not call for such a slogan and does not justify it.

While continuing our day-to-day work of preparing for the elections, and while not refusing beforehand to participate even in the most reactionary representative institutions, we must concentrate all our propaganda and agitation upon explaining to the people the connection between the December defeat and all the subsequent decline of liberty and abuse of the constitution. We must instill in the masses the firm conviction that unless there is a direct mass struggle such abuse will inevitably continue and grow stronger.

Without renouncing the application of the slogan of the boycott at times of rising revolution, when the need for such a slogan may seriously arise, we must at the present moment direct all our efforts towards transforming by our direct and immediate influence every rise in the labour movement into a general, wide, revolutionary and offensive movement against reaction as a whole and against its foundations

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(from the 'forties on) Marxism was engaged in combating theories fundamentally hostile to it. In the first half of the 'forties Marx and Engels demolished the radical Young Hegelians, who professed philosophical idealism. At the end of the 'forties the struggle invaded the domain of economic doctrine, in opposition to Proudhonism. The 'fifties saw the completion of this struggle: the criticism of the parties and doctrines which manifested themselves in the stormy year of 1848. In the 'sixties the struggle was transferred from the domain of general theory to a domain closer to the direct labour movement: the ejection of Bakunism from the International. In the early 'seventies the stage in Germany was occupied for a short while by the Proudhonist Mühlberger, and in the latter 'seventies by the positivist Dühring. But the influence of both on the proletariat was already absolutely insignificant. Marxism was already gaining an unquestionable victory over all other ideologies in the labour movement.

By the 'nineties this victory was in the main completed. Even in the Latin countries, where the traditions of Proudhonism held their ground longest of all, the labour parties actually based their programs and tactics on a Marxist foundation. The revived international organization of the labour movement—in the shape of periodical international congresses—from the outset, and almost without a struggle, adopted the Marxist standpoint in all essentials. But after Marxism had ousted all the more or less consistent doctrines hostile to it, the tendencies expressed in those doctrines began to seek other channels. The forms and motives of the struggle changed, but the struggle continued. And the second half-century in the existence of Marxism began (in the 'nineties) with the struggle of a trend hostile to Marxism within Marxism.

Bernstein, a one-time orthodox Marxist, gave his name to this current by making the most noise and advancing the most integral expression of the amendments to Marx, the revision of Marx, revisionism. Even in Russia, where, owing to the economic backwardness of the country and the preponderance of a peasant population oppressed by the relics of serfdom, non-Marxian Socialism has naturally held its ground longest of all, it is plainly passing into revisionism before our very eyes.

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Passing to political economy, it must be noted first of all that the "amendments" of the revisionists in this domain were much more comprehensive and circumstantial; attempts were made to influence the public by adducing "new data of economic development." It was said that concentration and the ousting of small-scale production by large-scale production do not occur in agriculture at all while concentration proceeds extremely slowly in commerce and industry. It was said that crises had now become rarer and of less force, and that the cartels and trusts would probably enable capital to do away with crises altogether. It was said that the "theory of the collapse" to which capitalism is heading, was unsound, owing to the tendency of class contradictions to become less acute and milder. It was said, finally, that it would not be amiss to correct Marx's theory of value in accordance with Böhm-Bawerk.

The fight against the revisionists on these questions resulted in as fruitful a revival of the theoretical thought of international Socialism as followed from Engels' controversy with Dühring twenty years earlier. The arguments of the revisionists were analysed with the help of facts and figures. It was proved that the revisionists were systematically presenting modern small-scale production in a favourable light. The technical and commercial superiority of large-scale *production* over small-scale production both in industry and in agriculture is proved by irrefutable facts. But commodity production is far less developed in agriculture, and modern statisticians and economists are usually not very skilful in picking out the special branches (sometimes even operations) in agriculture which indicate that agriculture is being progressively drawn into the

<sup>1</sup> See *Studies in the Philosophy of Marxism* by Bogdanov, Bazarov and others. This is not the place to discuss this book, and I must at present confine myself to stating that in the very near future I shall show in a series of articles or in a separate pamphlet that *everything* I have said in the text about the neo-Kantian revisionists essentially applies also to these "new" neo-Humist and neo-Berkeleyan revisionists. (In his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, which Lenin wrote shortly after [in 1909], he subjected Bogdanov and the rest of the revisionists, together with their philosophical teachers—Avenarius and Mach—to a withering criticism.—Ed.).

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ical and economic crises and of the complete wreck of the entire capitalist system—has been made very clear, and on a very large scale, precisely by the latest giant trusts. The recent financial crisis in America and the frightful increase of unemployment all over Europe, to say nothing of the impending industrial crisis to which many symptoms are pointing—all this has brought it about that the recent “theories” of the revisionists are being forgotten by everybody, even, it seems, by many of the revisionists themselves. But the lessons which this instability of the intellectuals has given the working class must not be forgotten.

As to the theory of value, it should only be said that apart from hints and sighs, exceedingly vague, for Böhm-Bawerk, the revisionists have here contributed absolutely nothing, and have therefore left no traces whatever on the development of scientific thought.

In the domain of politics, revisionism tried to revise the very foundation of Marxism, namely, the doctrine of the class struggle. Political freedom, democracy and universal suffrage remove the ground for the class struggle—we were told—and render untrue the old proposition of the *Communist Manifesto* that the workers have no country. For, they said, since the “will of the majority” prevails under democracy, one must neither regard the state as an organ of class rule, nor reject alliances with the progressive, social-reformist bourgeoisie against the reactionaries.

It cannot be disputed that these objections of the revisionists constituted a fairly harmonious system of views, namely, the old and well-known liberal bourgeois views. The liberals have always said that bourgeois parliamentarism destroys classes and class divisions, since the right to vote and the right to participate in state affairs are shared by all citizens without distinction. The whole history of Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century, and the whole history of the Russian Revolution at the beginning of the twentieth, clearly show how absurd such views are. Economic distinctions are aggravated and accentuated rather than mitigated under the freedom of “democratic” capitalism. Parliamentarism does not remove, but rather lays bare the innate character even of the most

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Socialist movement. "The movement is everything, the final aim is nothing"—this catchphrase of Bernstein's expresses the substance of revisionism better than many long arguments. The policy of revisionism consists in determining its conduct from case to case, in adapting itself to the events of the day and to the chops and changes of petty politics; it consists in forgetting the basic interests of the proletariat, the main features of the capitalist system as a whole and of capitalist evolution as a whole, and in sacrificing these basic interests for the real or assumed advantages of the moment. And it patently follows from the very nature of this policy that it may assume an infinite variety of forms, and that every more or less "new" question, every more or less unexpected and unforeseen turn of events, even though it may change the basic line of development only to an insignificant degree and only for the shortest period of time, will always inevitably give rise to one or another variety of revisionism.

The inevitability of revisionism is determined by its class roots in modern society. Revisionism is an international phenomenon. No more or less informed and thinking Socialist can have the slightest doubt that the relation between the orthodox and the Bernsteinites in Germany, the Guesdites and the Jauresites (and now particularly the Broussites) in France, the Social-Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party in Great Britain, de Brouckere and Vandervelde in Belgium, the integralists and the reformists in Italy, and the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks in Russia is everywhere essentially similar, notwithstanding the gigantic variety of national and historically-derived conditions in the present state of all these countries. In reality, the "division" within the present international Socialist movement is now proceeding along one line in all the various countries of the world, which testifies to a tremendous advance compared with thirty or forty years ago, when it was not like tendencies within a united international Socialist movement that were combating one another within the various countries. And the "revisionism from the Left" which has begun to take shape in the Latin countries, such as "revolutionary syndicalism," is also adapting itself to Marxism while "amending" it; Labriola in Italy and Lagardelle in France

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The genius of Marx and Engels consisted in the very fact that in the course of a long period, *nearly half a century*, they developed materialism, that they further advanced one fundamental trend in philosophy, that they did not confine themselves to reiterating epistemological problems that had already been solved, but consistently applied—and showed *how* to apply—*this same* materialism in the sphere of the social sciences, mercilessly brushing aside as litter and rubbish the pretentious rigmarole, the innumerable attempts to "discover" a "new" line in philosophy, to invent a "new" trend and so forth. The verbal nature of such attempts, the scholastic play with new philosophical "isms," the clogging of the issue by pretentious devices, the inability to comprehend and clearly present the struggle between the two fundamental epistemological trends—this is what Marx and Engels persistently pursued and fought against throughout their entire activity.

We said, "nearly half a century." And, indeed, as far back as 1843, when Marx was only becoming Marx, *i.e.*, the founder of scientific Socialism, the founder of *modern materialism*, which is immeasurably richer in content and incomparably more consistent than all preceding forms of materialism, even at that time Marx pointed out with amazing clarity the basic trends in philosophy. Karl Grün quotes a letter from Marx to Feuerbach dated October 20, 1843, in which Marx invites Feuerbach to write an article for the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher* against Schelling. This Schelling, writes Marx, is a shallow braggart with his claims to having embraced and transcended all previous philosophical trends. "To the French romanticists and mystics he [Schelling] says: I am the union of philosophy and theology; to the French materialists: I am the union of the flesh and the idea; to the French sceptics: I am the destroyer of dogmatism."<sup>1</sup> That the "sceptics," be they

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That Engels followed the new developments in philosophy is evident from *Ludwig Feuerbach*. In the 1888 preface, mention is even made of such a phenomenon as the rebirth of classical German philosophy in England and Scandinavia, whereas Engels (both in the preface and in the text of the book) has nothing but contempt for the prevailing neo-Kantianism and Humism. It is quite obvious that Engels, observing the repetition by *fashionable* German and English philosophy of the old pre-Hegelian errors of Kantianism and Humism, was prepared to expect some good even *from the turn to Hegel* (in England and Scandinavia), hoping that the great idealist and dialectician would help to disclose petty idealist and metaphysical errors.

Without undertaking an examination of the vast number of shades of neo-Kantianism in Germany and of Humism in England, Engels *from the very outset* refutes their fundamental deviation from materialism. Engels declares that the *entire tendency* of these two schools is "*scientifically a step backward.*" And what is his opinion of the undoubtedly "positivist," according to the current terminology, the undoubtedly "realist" tendencies of these neo-Kantians and Humeans, among whose number, for instance, he could not help knowing Huxley? That

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current on their way. We aim at definition and clarity. The reactionaries who sound a retreat call themselves idealists,<sup>1</sup> and materialists should be the name for all who are striving to liberate the human mind from the metaphysical spell.... If we compare the two parties respectively to solid and liquid, between them there is a mush."<sup>2</sup>

True! The "realists," etc., including the "positivists," the Machians, etc., are all a wretched mush; they are a contemptible *middle party* in philosophy, who confuse the materialist and idealist trends on every question. The attempt to escape these two basic trends in philosophy is nothing but "conciliatory quackery."

J. Dietzgen had not the slightest doubt that the "scientific priestcraft" of idealist philosophy is simply the antechamber to open priestcraft. "Scientific priestcraft" he wrote, "is seriously endeavouring to assist religious priestcraft" (*op. cit.*, p. 51). "In particular, the sphere of epistemology, the misunderstanding of the human mind, is such a louse-hole" (*Lausgrube*) in which both kinds of priests "lay their eggs." "Graduated flunkys," who with their talk of "ideal blessings" stultify the people by their sham (*geschraubte*) "idealism" (p. 53)—that is J. Dietzgen's opinion of the professors of philosophy. "Just as the antipodes of the good God is the devil, so the professorial priest (*Kathederpaffen*) has his opposite pole in the materialist." The materialist theory of knowledge is "a universal weapon against religious belief" (p. 55), and not only against the "notorious, formal and common religion of the priests, but also against the most refined, elevated professorial religion of muddled (*benebelte*) idealists" (p. 58).

Dietzgen was ready to prefer "religious honesty" to the "half-heartedness" of freethinking professors (p. 60), for "there at least there is a system." there we find complete people, people who do not separate theory from practice. For the Herr Professors "philosophy is not a science, but a means of defence against Social-Democracy..." (p. 107). "All who call themselves

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It is the misfortune of the Russian Machians, who undertook to "reconcile" Machism and Marxism, that they trusted the reactionary professors of philosophy and as a result slipped down an inclined plane. The methods of operation employed in the various attempts to develop and supplement Marx were not very ingenious. They read Ostwald, believe Ostwald, paraphrase Ostwald and call it Marxism. They read Mach, believe Mach, paraphrase Mach and call it Marxism. They read Poincaré, believe Poincaré, paraphrase Poincaré and call it Marxism! *Not a single one* of these professors, who are capable of making very valuable contributions in the special fields of chemistry, history, or physics, *can be trusted one iota* when it comes to philosophy. Why? For the same reason that *not a single* professor of political economy, who may be capable of very valuable contributions in the field of factual and specialized investigations, can be trusted *one iota* when it comes to the general theory of political economy. For in modern society the latter is as much a *partisan* science as is *epistemology*. Taken as a whole, the professors of economics are nothing but learned salesmen of the capitalist class, while the professors of philosophy are learned salesmen of the theologians.

The task of Marxists in both cases is to be able to master and adapt the achievements of these "salesmen" (for instance, you will not make the slightest progress in the investigation of new economic phenomena unless you have recourse to the works of these salesmen) and *to be able* to lop off their reactionary tendency, to pursue one's *own* line and to combat the *whole alignment* of forces and classes hostile to us. And this is just what our Machians were unable to do; they *slavishly* followed the lead of the reactionary professorial philosophy. "Perhaps we have gone astray, but we are seeking," wrote Lunacharsky in the name of the authors of the *Studies*. The

and only for practical purposes, without any metaphysics, and without transcending the bounds of experience (*cf.* William James, *Pragmatism. A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking*, New York, 1907, pp. 57 and 106 especially). From the standpoint of materialism the difference between Machism and pragmatism is as insignificant and unimportant as the difference between empirio-criticism and empirio-monism. Compare, for example, Bogdanov's definition of truth with the pragmatist definition of truth, which is: "Truth for a pragmatist becomes a class-name for all sorts of definite working values in experience" (*ibid.*, p. 68).

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Mach praises, of Carus and of all the immanentists. The neutrality of *a philosopher* in this question *is in itself* servility to fideism, and Mach and Avenarius, because of the very premises of their epistemology, do not and cannot rise above neutrality.

Once you deny objective reality, given us in sensation, you have already lost every one of your weapons against fideism, for you have slipped into agnosticism or subjectivism—and that is all fideism wants. If the perceptual world is objective reality, then the door is closed to every other “reality” or quasi-reality (remember that Bazarov believed the “realism” of the immanentists, who declare God to be a “real concept”). If the world is matter-in motion, matter can and must be infinitely studied in the infinitely complex and detailed manifestations and ramifications of *this* motion, the motion of *this* matter; but beyond it, beyond the “physical,” external world, with which everyone is familiar, there can be nothing. And the hostility to materialism and the showers of abuse heaped on the materialists are all in the order of things in civilized and democratic Europe. All this is going on to this day. All this is being *concealed* from the public by the Russian Machians, who have *not once* attempted even simply to compare the attacks made on materialism by Mach, Avenarius, Petzoldt and Co., with the statements made *in favour* of materialism by Feuerbach, Marx, Engels and J. Dietzgen.

But this “concealment” of the relation of Mach and Avenarius to fideism will not avail. The facts speak for themselves. No efforts can release these reactionary professors from the pillory in which they have been placed by the kisses of Ward, the neo-criticists, Schuppe, Schubert-Soldern, Leclair, the pragmatists, etc. And the influence of the persons mentioned, as philosophers and professors, the popularity of their ideas among the “cultured,” *i.e.*, the bourgeois, public and the specific literature they have created are ten times wider and richer than the particular little school of Mach and Avenarius. The little school serves those it should serve, and it is exploited as it deserves to be exploited.

The shameful things to which Lunacharsky has stooped are not exceptional; they are the product of empirio-criticism, both Russian and German. They cannot be defended on the grounds

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## THE ATTITUDE OF THE WORKERS' PARTY TOWARDS RELIGION

The speech made by deputy Surkov in the State Duma during the debate on the estimates of the Synod, and the discussion that took place within our Duma fraction on the draft of this speech, which we print elsewhere in this issue, have raised a question which is of extreme importance and urgency at this particular moment. An interest in all questions connected with religion is undoubtedly being evinced today by wide circles of "society," and it has penetrated to the ranks of the intellectuals who are close to the working-class movement and to certain circles of the workers. It is the absolute duty of Social-Democrats to make a public statement of their attitude towards religion.

Social-Democracy bases its whole world outlook on scientific Socialism, i.e., Marxism. The philosophical basis of Marxism, as Marx and Engels repeatedly declared, is dialectical materialism, which fully embodies the historical traditions of the materialism of the eighteenth century in France and of Feuerbach (first half of the nineteenth century) in Germany—a materialism which is absolutely atheistic and resolutely hostile to all religion. Let us recall that the whole of Engels' *Anti-Dühring*, which Marx read in manuscript, is an indictment of the materialist and atheist Dühring for not being a consistent materialist and for leaving loopholes for religion and religious philosophy. Let us recall that in his essay on Ludwig Feuerbach, Engels reproaches Feuerbach for combating religion not in order to destroy it, but in order to renovate it, to create a new, "exalted" religion, and so forth. Religion is the opium of the people—this dictum of Marx's is the cornerstone of the

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form, Engels demanded that the workers' party should know how to work patiently at the task of organizing and educating the proletariat, which would lead to the dying out of religion, and not venture into a political war on religion. This view has thoroughly permeated German Social-Democracy, which, for example, advocated freedom for the Jesuits, their admission into Germany, and the complete cessation of police methods of combating any particular religion. "Religion is a private matter"; this famous point in the Erfurt Program (1891) endorsed the political tactics of Social-Democracy mentioned.

These tactics have now managed to become a mere matter of routine; they have already managed to give rise to a new distortion of Marxism in the opposite direction, in the direction of opportunism. This point in the Erfurt Program has come to be interpreted as meaning that we Social-Democrats, that our Party *considers* religion to be a private matter, that religion is a private matter for us as Social-Democrats, for us as a Party. Without entering into a direct controversy with this opportunist view, Engels in the 'nineties deemed it necessary to oppose it resolutely in a positive, and not a polemical form. To wit: Engels did this in a statement, which he deliberately underlined, that Social-Democrats regard religion as a private matter *in relation to the state*, but not in relation to themselves, not in relation to Marxism, and not in relation to the workers party.<sup>1</sup>

Such is the external history of the utterances of Marx and Engels on the question of religion. To people who are careless of Marxism, to people who cannot or will not think, this history is a skein of meaningless Marxist contradictions and waverings, a hodge-podge of "consistent" atheism and "sops" to religion, "unprincipled" wavering between a r-r-revolutionary war on God and a cowardly desire to "ingratiate" oneself with religious workers, a fear of scaring them away, etc., etc. The literature of the anarchist phrasemongers is full of attacks on Marxism on this score.

But anybody who is able to treat Marxism at all seriously, to ponder over its philosophical principles and the experience

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ing masses and their apparently complete helplessness in face of the blind forces of capitalism, which every day and every hour inflicts upon ordinary working people the most horrible suffering and the most savage torment, a thousand times more severe than those inflicted by extraordinary events, such as wars, earthquakes, etc. "Fear created the gods." Fear of the blind force of capital—blind because it cannot be foreseen by the masses of the people—a force which at every step in life threatens to inflict, and does inflict on the proletarian and small owner "sudden," "unexpected," "accidental" destruction, ruin, pauperism, prostitution and death from starvation—such is *the root* of modern religion which the materialist must bear in mind first and foremost if he does not want to remain an infant-school materialist. No educational book can eradicate religion from the minds of the masses, who are crushed by the grinding toil of capitalism and who are at the mercy of the blind destructive forces of capitalism, until these masses themselves learn to fight this *root* of religion, *the rule of capital* in all its forms, in a united, organized, planned and conscious way.

Does this mean that educational books against religion are harmful or unnecessary? No, nothing of the kind. It means that Social-Democracy's atheistic propaganda must be *subordinated* to its basic task—the development of the class struggle of the exploited masses against the exploiters.

This proposition may not be understood (or at least not immediately understood) by one who has not pondered over the principles of dialectical materialism, *i.e.*, the philosophy of Marx and Engels. How is that?—he will say: is ideological propaganda, the preaching of definite ideas, the struggle against the enemy of culture and progress for thousands of years (*i.e.*, religion) to be subordinated to the class struggle, *i.e.*, a struggle for definite practical aims in the economic and political field?

This is one of those current objections to Marxism which testify to a thorough misunderstanding of Marxian dialectics. The contradiction which perplexes those who object in this way is a real and living contradiction, *i.e.*, a dialectical contradiction, and not a verbal or fictitious contradiction. To draw

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struggle which is going on *in practice* and educating the masses more and better than anything else. A Marxist must be able to take cognizance of the concrete situation as a whole, must always be able to determine the boundary between anarchism and opportunism (this boundary is relative, movable and changeable, but it exists), and must not succumb either to the abstract, verbal, and in fact empty "revolutionism" of the Anarchist, or to the philistinism and opportunism of the petty-bourgeois or liberal intellectual, who fears to fight religion, forgets that this is his duty, reconciles himself to the belief in God, and is guided not by the interests of the class struggle, but by the petty and mean consideration of offending nobody, repelling nobody and scaring nobody—by the sage rule: "live and let live," etc., etc.

It is from this standpoint that all particular questions concerning the attitude of Social-Democrats to religion must be determined. For example, the question often arises whether a priest can be a member of the Social-Democratic Party, and the question is usually answered in an unqualified affirmative, the experience of European Social-Democratic Parties being cited in support. But this experience was the result not only of the application of the Marxist doctrine to the workers' movement but also of special historical conditions in Western Europe which are absent in Russia (we will say more about these conditions later), so that an unqualified affirmative in this case is incorrect. We must not declare once and for all that priests cannot be members of the Social-Democratic Party; but neither must we once and for all affirm the contrary rule. If a priest comes to us to engage in joint political work and conscientiously performs Party duties, and does not come out against the program of the Party, he may be allowed to join the ranks of Social-Democrats; for in such a case the contradiction between the spirit and principles of our program and the religious convictions of the priest would remain something that concerned him alone, his own private contradiction; and a political organization cannot examine its members to see if there is no contradiction between their views and the program of the Party. But, of course, such a case might be a rare exception even in Western Europe, while in Russia it is alto-

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eral as a sacrifice of the fundamental interests of the workers' movement for momentary advantages. The party of the proletariat demands *that the state* should declare religion a private matter, but does not regard the fight against the opium of the people, the fight against religious superstition, etc., as a "private matter." The opportunists distort the question to mean that the *Social-Democratic Party regards* religion as a private matter!

But in addition to the usual opportunist distortion (which was not explained at all in the discussion by our Duma fraction of the speeches in the debate on religion), there are special historical conditions which have given rise to the modern, and if one may so express it, excessive indifference of European Social-Democrats to the question of religion. These conditions are of a twofold nature. Firstly, the task of combating religion is the historical task of the revolutionary bourgeoisie, and in the West this task was to a large extent performed (or tackled) by bourgeois democracy in the epoch of *its* revolutions, or its attacks upon feudalism and mediaevalism. There is a tradition of bourgeois war on religion both in France and in Germany, a war which was begun long before Socialism (The Encyclopedists, Feuerbach). In Russia, because of the conditions of our bourgeois-democratic revolution, this task too falls almost entirely on the shoulders of the working class. Petty-bourgeois (*Narodnik*) democracy in our country has in this respect not done too much (as the newly-appeared Black-Hundred Cadets, or Cadet Black-Hundreds, of *Vekhi*<sup>1</sup> think), but rather *too little* in comparison with what has been done in Europe.

On the other hand, the tradition of the bourgeois war on religion has given rise in Europe to a specifically bourgeois *distortion* of this war by anarchism, which, as the Marxists have long ago explained time and again, takes its stand on the bourgeois world outlook in spite of all the "fury" of its attacks upon the bourgeoisie. The Anarchists and Blanquists in the Latin countries, Most (who, incidentally, was a pupil

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The second duty—and perhaps the most important for Social-Democrats—namely, to explain the class role of the church and the clergy in supporting the Black-Hundred government and the bourgeoisie in its fight against the working class, has also been discharged with honour. Of course, very much more might be said on this subject, and the Social-Democrats in their future utterances will know how to amplify Comrade Surkov's speech; but still his speech was excellent, and its dissemination by all Party organizations is the direct duty of our Party.

The third duty was to explain in full detail the *correct* meaning of the proposition so often distorted by the German opportunists, namely, that "religion is a private matter." This, unfortunately, Comrade Surkov did not do. It is all the more a pity because in the earlier activity of the fraction a mistake was already committed on this question by Comrade Byeloussov, which was noted at the time by the *Proletary*. The discussion in the fraction shows that the dispute about atheism has overshadowed in its eyes the question of the proper interpretation of the famous demand that religion should be regarded as a private matter. We shall not blame Comrade Surkov alone for this error of the entire fraction. Moreover, we shall frankly admit that the whole Party was at fault here for not having sufficiently explained this question, for not having sufficiently prepared the minds of Social-Democrats for the significance of Engels' remark regarding the German opportunists. The discussion in the fraction proves that it was in fact due to a confused understanding of the question. and

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# DIFFERENCES IN THE EUROPEAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

## I

The principal tactical differences in the present labour movement of Europe and America reduce themselves to a struggle against two big trends that are departing from Marxism, which has in fact become the dominant theory in this movement. These two trends are revisionism (opportunism, reformism) and anarchism (anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-socialism). Both these departures from the Marxist theory that is dominant in the labour movement, and from Marxist tactics, were to be observed in various forms and in various shades in all civilized countries during the course of the more than half-century of history of the mass labour movement.

This fact alone shows that these departures cannot be attributed to accident, or to the mistakes of individuals or groups, or even to the influence of national characteristics and traditions, and so forth. There must be radical causes in the economic system and in the character of the development of all capitalist countries which constantly give rise to these departures. A small book published last year by a Dutch Marxist, Anton Pannekoek, *The Tactical Differences in the Labour Movement* (*Die taktischen Differenzen in der Arbeiterbewegung*, Hamburg, Erdmann Dubber, 1909), represents an interesting attempt at a scientific investigation of these causes. In the course of our exposition we shall acquaint the reader with Pannekoek's conclusions, which it cannot be denied are quite correct.

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Bourgeois ideologists, liberals and democrats, not understanding Marxism, and not understanding the modern labour movement, are constantly leaping from one futile extreme to another. At one time they explain the whole matter by asserting that evil-minded persons are "inciting" class against class—at another they console themselves with the assertion that the workers' party is "a peaceful party of reform." Both anarcho-syndicalism and reformism—which seize upon one aspect of the labour movement, which elevate one-sidedness to a theory, and which declare such tendencies or features of this movement as constitute a specific peculiarity of a given period, of given conditions of working-class activity, to be mutually exclusive—must be regarded as a direct product of this bourgeois world conception and its influence. But real life, real history, *includes* these different tendencies, just as life and development in nature include both slow evolution and rapid leaps, breaks in continuity.

The revisionists regard as mere phrasemongering all reflections on "leaps" and on the fundamental antithesis between the labour movement and the whole of the old society. They regard reforms as a partial realization of Socialism. The anarcho-syndicalist rejects "petty work," especially the utilization of the parliamentary platform. As a matter of fact, these latter tactics amount to waiting for the "great days" and to an inability to muster the forces which create great events. Both hinder the most important and most essential thing, namely, the concentration of the workers into big, powerful and properly functioning organizations, capable of functioning properly under *all* circumstances, permeated with the spirit of the class struggle, clearly realizing their aims and trained in the true Marxist world conception.

We shall here permit ourselves a slight digression and note

of practical life, of the practical history of capitalism and the labour movement. But needless to say, the masses learn from practical life and not from books, and therefore certain individuals or groups constantly exaggerate, elevate to a one-sided theory, to a one-sided system of tactics, now one and now another feature of capitalist development, now one and now another "lesson" from this development.

Bourgeois ideologists, liberals and democrats, not understanding Marxism, and not understanding the modern labour movement, are constantly leaping from one futile extreme to another. At one time they explain the whole matter by asserting that evil-minded persons are "inciling" class against class—at another they console themselves with the assertion that the workers' party is "a peaceful party of reform." Both anarcho-syndicalism and reformism—which seize upon one aspect of the labour movement, which elevate one-sidedness to a theory, and which declare such tendencies or features of this movement as constitute a specific peculiarity of a given period, of given conditions of working-class activity, to be mutually exclusive—must be regarded as a direct product of this bourgeois world conception and its influence. But real life, real history, *includes* these different tendencies, just as life and development in nature include both slow evolution and rapid leaps, breaks in continuity.

The revisionists regard as mere phrasemongering all reflections on "leaps" and on the fundamental antithesis between the labour movement and the whole of the old society. They regard reforms as a partial realization of Socialism. The anarcho-syndicalist rejects "petty work," especially the utilization of the parliamentary platform. As a matter of fact, these latter tactics amount to waiting for the "great days" and to an inability to muster the forces which create great events. Both hinder the most important and most essential thing, namely, the concentration of the workers into big, powerful and properly functioning organizations, capable of functioning properly under *all* circumstances, permeated with the spirit of the class struggle, clearly realizing their aims and trained in the true Marxist world conception.

We shall here permit ourselves a slight digression and note

production itself, with its high technique, complexity, flexibility, mobility, rapidity of development of world competition, and so forth. The oscillations in the tactics of the bourgeoisie, the passage from the system of force to the system of apparent concessions, are, consequently, peculiar to the history of all European countries during the last half-century, while, at the same time, various countries chiefly develop the application of one method or the other at definite periods. For instance, England in the 'sixties and 'seventies was a classical country of "liberal" bourgeois policy, Germany in the 'seventies and 'eighties adhered to the method of force, and so on.

When this method prevailed in Germany, a one-sided echo of this system, one of the systems of bourgeois government, was the growth of anarcho-syndicalism, or anarchism, as it was then called, in the labour movement (the "Young" at the beginning of the 'nineties, Johann Most at the beginning of the 'eighties). When in 1890 the change towards "concessions" took place, this change, as is always the case, proved to be even more dangerous to the labour movement, and gave rise to an equally one-sided echo of bourgeois "reformism": opportunism in the labour movement. "The positive and real aim of the liberal policy of the bourgeoisie," Pannekoek says, "is to mislead the workers, to cause a split in their ranks, to transform their policy into an impotent adjunct of an impotent, always impotent and ephemeral, sham reformism."

Not infrequently, the bourgeoisie for a certain time achieves its object by a "liberal" policy, which, as Pannekoek justly remarks, is a "more crafty" policy. A part of the workers and a part of their representatives at times allow themselves to be deceived by sham concessions. The revisionists declare the doctrine of the class struggle to be "antiquated," or begin to conduct a policy which in fact amounts to a renunciation of the class struggle. The zigzags of bourgeois tactics intensify revisionism within the labour movement and not infrequently exacerbate the differences within the labour movement to the pitch of a direct split.

All causes of the kind indicated give rise to differences on questions of tactics within the labour movement and within the proletarian ranks. But there is not and cannot be a Chinese

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## CERTAIN FEATURES OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF MARXISM

Our doctrine—said Engels, referring to himself and his famous friend—is not a dogma, but a guide to action. This classical statement stresses with remarkable force and expressiveness that aspect of Marxism which is constantly being lost sight of. And by losing sight of it, we turn Marxism into something one-sided, disfigured and lifeless; we deprive it of its living soul; we undermine its basic theoretical foundations—dialectics, the doctrine that historical development is all-embracing and full of contradictions; we sever its connection with the definite practical tasks of the epoch, which may change with every new turn of history.

And, indeed, in our time people are very frequently to be met with among those interested in the fate of Marxism in Russia who lose sight precisely of this aspect of Marxism. Yet, it must be clear to everybody that in recent years Russia has undergone changes so abrupt as to alter the situation with unusual rapidity and unusual force—the social and political situation, which in a most direct and immediate manner determines the conditions of action, and, hence, the aims of action. I am not referring, of course, to general and fundamental aims, which do not change with turns of history so long as the fundamental relations between classes do not change. It is perfectly obvious that this general trend of economic (and not only economic) evolution in Russia, like the fundamental relations between the various classes of Russian society, has not changed during, say, the last six years.

But the aims of direct and immediate action have changed very markedly during this period, just as the concrete social

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to be bourgeois owing to the capitalist character of the evolution of Russia. But there is a bourgeoisie and a bourgeoisie. The middle and big bourgeoisie, which professed a more or less moderate liberalism, was, owing to its very class position, afraid of abrupt changes and strove for the retention of large remnants of the old institutions both in the agrarian system and in the political "superstructure." The rural petty bourgeoisie, which is interwoven with the peasantry that lives by "the labour of its own hands," was bound to strive for bourgeois reforms of a different kind, reforms that would leave far less room for mediaeval survivals. The wage-labourers, to the extent that they consciously realized what was going on around them, were bound to work out for themselves a definite attitude towards this clash of two distinct tendencies, both of which remained within the framework of the bourgeois system, but which determined entirely different forms for it, entirely different rates of its development, different degrees of its progressive influences.

In this way, the period of the past three years, not fortuitously but necessarily, brought to the forefront in Marxism those problems which are usually referred to as problems of tactics. Nothing is more erroneous than the opinion that the disputes and differences that arose over these questions were "intellectual" disputes, that they were "a struggle for influence over the immature proletariat," that they were an expression of the "adaptation of the intelligentsia to the proletariat," as all the *Vekha*-ites of various kinds think. On the contrary, it was precisely because this class had reached maturity that it could not remain indifferent to the clash of the two different tendencies in the entire bourgeois development of Russia, and the ideologists of this class could not avoid providing theoretical formulations corresponding directly or indirectly, in direct or reverse reflection) to these different tendencies.

In the second three-year period the clash between the different tendencies of bourgeois development in Russia was *not* on the order of the day, because *both* these tendencies were being crushed by the "die-hards," forced back, driven inwards and, for the time being, smothered. The mediaeval die-hards not only occupied the foreground but also inspired broad sec-

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tions of the classes that cannot avoid Marxism in formulating their aims had assimilated Marxism in an extremely one-sided and mutilated fashion, having learnt by rote certain "slogans," certain answers to tactical questions, *without having understood* the Marxist criteria of these answers. The "revaluation of values" in all the various spheres of social life led to a "revision" of the most abstract and general philosophical foundations of Marxism. The influence of bourgeois philosophy in its multifarious idealist shades found expression in the Machian epidemic<sup>1</sup> that broke out among the Marxists. The repetition of "slogans" learnt by rote but not understood and not thought out led to the widespread prevalence of empty phrasemongering, which in practice amounted to absolutely un-Marxist, petty-bourgeois currents, such as frank or shame-faced "Otzovism,"<sup>2</sup> or the recognition of Otzovism as a "legitimate shade" of Marxism.

On the other hand, the spirit of *Vekha-ism*, the spirit of recantation which had taken possession of very wide sections of the bourgeoisie, penetrated to the current which endeavours to confine Marxist theory and practice to "moderate and decent" channels. All that remained Marxist here was the phraseology that served to clothe the arguments about "hierarchy," "hegemony" and so forth, which were thoroughly infected by the spirit of liberalism.

It cannot, of course, be the purpose of this article to examine these arguments. A mere reference to them is sufficient to illustrate what has been said above regarding the profundity of the crisis through which Marxism is passing, regarding its connection with the whole social and economic situation in the present period. The questions raised by this crisis cannot be brushed aside. Nothing can be more pernicious or unprincipled than the attempts to dismiss them by phrasemongering. Nothing is more important than to rally *all* Marxists who have re-

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## REFORMISM IN THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL- DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

The tremendous progress which capitalism has made in recent decades and the rapid growth of the working-class movement in all the civilized countries have brought about a marked change in the attitude of the bourgeoisie to the proletariat. Instead of carrying on an open, principled and direct fight against all the fundamental tenets of Socialism and in defence of the complete inviolability of private property and the freedom of competition, the bourgeoisie of Europe and America—as represented by its ideologists and political leaders—is coming out ever more frequently in defence of so-called social reforms as opposed to the idea of social revolution. Not liberalism versus Socialism, but reformism versus Socialist revolution—that is the formula of the modern, “advanced,” educated bourgeoisie. And the higher the development of capitalism in a given country, the more unadulterated the rule of the bourgeoisie, and the greater the amount of political liberty, the more extensive is the application of the “most up-to-date” bourgeois slogan: reform *versus* revolution; partial patching up of the doomed regime, with the object of dividing and weakening the working class, with the object of maintaining the rule of the bourgeoisie, *versus* the revolutionary overthrowal of that rule.

From the viewpoint of the world-wide development of Socialism the mentioned change cannot but be regarded as a big step forward. At first Socialism fought for its existence, and it was confronted by a bourgeoisie confident of its strength and boldly and consistently defending liberalism as an integral system of economic and political views. Now Socialism has grown

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country are more prone to lose heart and to succumb to sentiments of renegacy at the failure of any *one* of the phases of our bourgeois revolution; they are more ready to renounce the aim of a complete democratic revolution which would rid Russia thoroughly of all the survivals of mediaevalism and serfdom.

We shall not dwell at length on the first source. We need only mention that there is hardly a country in the world in which such rapid "about-faces" from sympathy for Socialism to sympathy for counter-revolutionary liberalism occur as in the case of our Struves, Izgoyevs, Karaulovs, etc., etc. Yet these gentlemen are not exceptions, not isolated individuals, but representatives of widespread currents! Sentimentalists, of whom there are many outside the ranks of the Social-Democratic movement, but also a goodly number in its ranks, and who love to preach sermons against "immoderate" polemics, against "the passion for drawing dividing lines," etc., betray a complete lack of understanding as to the historical conditions which, in Russia, give rise to the "immoderate" "passion" for precipitous changes from Socialism to liberalism.

Let us turn to the second source of reformism in Russia

The bourgeois revolution has not been completed in our country. The autocracy is *trying* to find new ways of solving the problems bequeathed by that revolution and imposed by the entire course of economic development; *but it is unable to solve them*. Neither the latest step in the transformation of old tsarism into a renovated bourgeois monarchy, nor the organization of the nobility and the upper crust of the bourgeoisie on a national scale (the Third Duma), nor yet the bourgeois agrarian policy which is being enforced by the *Zemsky Nachalniks*<sup>1</sup>—none of these "extreme" measures, none of these "last" efforts of tsarism in the *last* sphere remaining to it—the sphere of adaptation to bourgeois development—prove adequate. It does not work! Far from catching up with the Japanese, Russia, "renovated" by *such* means, is, perhaps, even beginning

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To preach to the workers that they need “not hegemony, but a class party,” means to betray the cause of the proletariat to the liberals; it means preaching that the *Social-Democratic* labour policy should be superseded by a *liberal* labour policy.

The renunciation of the idea of hegemony, however, is the grossest variety of reformism in the Russian Social-Democratic movement, and that is why not all the Liquidators<sup>1</sup> make bold to express their ideas in such definite terms. Some of them (Mr. Martov, for instance) even try, in derision of the truth, to deny that there is a connection between the renunciation of hegemony and liquidationism.

A more “subtle” attempt to “substantiate” the reformist views is the following argument: The bourgeois revolution in Russia is at an end; after 1905 there can be no second bourgeois revolution, there can be no repetition of the nation-wide struggle for a democratic revolution; therefore there is no prospect of a *revolutionary* crisis in Russia; there is only the prospect of a “constitutional” crisis, and all that remains for the working class to do is to take care to defend its rights and interests on the basis of that “constitutional crisis.” Those are the arguments set forth by the Liquidator Y. Larin in the *Dyelo Zhizni* (and previously in the *Vozrozhdeniye*).

“October 1905 is not on the order of the day,” wrote Mr. Larin. “If the Duma were abolished, it would be restored more rapidly than in post-revolutionary Austria, which abolished the constitution in 1851 only to recognize it again in 1860, nine years later, without any revolution [note this!], simply be-

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"push" toward revolution, but, like good boys, work modestly for reforms.

That is why, in order to divert the Russian worker *from* Socialism, the reformists—who are the captives of bourgeois ideas—*constantly* refer to the example of *Austria* (as well as *Prussia*) in the 1860's. Why are they so fond of referring precisely to these examples? Y. Larin let the cat out of the bag; because in these countries, after the "unsuccessful" revolution of 1848, the bourgeois transformation was consummated "*without any revolution.*"

That is the crux of the matter! That is what gladdens their hearts. For that seems to indicate that bourgeois change is possible *without* revolution!! And if that is the case, why should we Russians bother our heads about a revolution? Why not leave it to the landlords and factory-owners to effect the bourgeois transformation of Russia, too, "without any revolution"?!

It was because the proletariat in Austria and Prussia was weak that it was unable to prevent the agrarians and the bourgeoisie from effecting the transformation in a way that ran *counter* to the interests of the workers, in a form *most prejudicial* to the workers, preserving the monarchy, the privileges of the nobility, their arbitrary rule in the countryside, and a host of other survivals of mediaevalism.

The Russian reformists—after our proletariat displayed in 1905 a strength unparalleled in any bourgeois revolution in the West—fall back upon the examples of the weakness of the working class in other countries, forty or fifty years ago, in order to justify *their own* renegacy, to adduce "grounds" for *their own* propaganda of renegacy!

Austria and Prussia of the 1860's, to which our reformists are so fond of referring, furnish the best example proving the theoretical fallacy of their arguments and their desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie in practical politics.

Indeed: What does the fact that Austria restored the constitution which had been abolished after the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, and that an "era of crisis" was ushered in in Prussia in the 1860's, prove? It proves, primarily, that the bourgeois transformation of these countries had not been consummated. To maintain that the system of government in

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Indeed: What does the fact that Austria restored the constitution which had been abolished after the defeat of the Revolution of 1848, and that an "era of crisis" was ushered in in Prussia in the 1860's, prove? It proves, primarily, that the bourgeois transformation of these countries had not been consummated. To maintain *that* the system of government in

"These events show," says Bebel, "what the liberals might have achieved had they taken advantage of the situation. But they were already afraid of the workers who backed them. Bismarck's words that if he was driven to extremes, he would set Acheron in motion [*i.e.*, rouse the "nether world," the lower classes, the masses of the people], struck fear into their hearts."

Half a century after the "constitutional" crisis which consummated the transformation of his country into a bourgeois-Junker monarchy "without any revolution," the leader of the German Social-Democrats speaks of the *revolutionary* possibilities of the situation at that time, which the liberals did not take advantage of owing to their fear of the workers. The leaders of the Russian reformists say to the Russian workers: Since the German bourgeoisie was so base as to cower before the cowering king, why shouldn't we *too* try to copy those splendid tactics of the German bourgeoisie? Bebel accuses the bourgeoisie of having, owing to its exploiter's fear of the popular movement, failed to "take advantage" of the "constitutional" crisis to effect a revolution. Larin and Co. accuse the Russian workers of having striven for hegemony (*i.e.*, to draw the masses into the revolution in spite of the liberals), and advise them to organize "*not* for revolution," *but* "for the purpose of defending their interests in the forthcoming constitutional renovation of Russia." The rotten views of the rotten German liberals are presented by the Liquidators to the Russian workers as being "Social-Democratic" views! How, after this, can one help calling such Social-Democrats Stolypin Social-Democrats?

In appraising the "constitutional" crisis of the 1860's in Prussia, Bebel does not confine himself to the statement that the bourgeoisie was afraid to fight the monarchy because it was afraid of the workers. He also tells us what was going on among the workers at that time. "The appalling state of public affairs," he says, "of which the workers were becoming ever more keenly aware, naturally affected their mood. Everywhere there was a clamour for change. But since there was no leadership fully conscious of the needs, having a clear vision of the goal, and enjoying confidence; and since there existed no

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as Mr. Martov, for instance, does when he asserts in the legally-published press (that is to say, where he is protected by Stolypin from a direct retort by members of the R.S.D.L.P.) that Larin and "the orthodox Bolsheviks in the resolutions of 1908" propose an *identical* "scheme." This is a distortion of the facts worthy of this author of scurrilous writings. The same Martov, pretending to argue against Larin, declared in print that he, "of course" does "not suspect Larin of reformist tendencies." Martov *does not suspect* Larin, who espouses *purely* reformist views, of being a reformist!! This is an example of the tricks to which the diplomats of reformism resort.<sup>1</sup> The same Martov, whom some simpletons regard as being more "left," and a more reliable revolutionary, than Larin, summed up his "differences" with the latter in the following words:

"To sum up: quite sufficient evidence for the theoretical substantiation and political justification of what the Mensheviks who remain true to Marxism are now doing is contained in the fact that the present regime is an inherently contradictory combination of absolutism and constitutionalism, and that the Russian working class has sufficiently matured to follow the example of the workers of the progressive countries of the West in striking at this regime through the Achilles heel of its contradictions."

No matter how hard Martov tried to evade the issue, the result of his very first attempt at a summary was that all his evasions collapsed of themselves. The words quoted above represent a complete renunciation of Socialism and its supersession by liberalism. What Martov proclaims as "quite sufficient" is sufficient *only* for the liberals, *only* for the bourgeoisie. A proletarian who considers it "quite sufficient" to recognize the contradictory nature of the combination of absolutism and constitutionalism accepts the standpoint of a *liberal labour* policy. He is *no* Socialist, he does *not* understand the tasks of his *class* which demand that the masses of the people, the

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That is consummate, frank, smug reformism of the purest water. War against the idea of revolution, against the "hopes" for revolution (in the eyes of the reformist such "hopes" are *vague*, because he does not comprehend the depth of the contemporary economic and political contradictions); war against every activity whose purpose is to organize the forces and prepare the minds for revolution; war waged in the legally published press, protected by Stolypin from a direct retort by revolutionary Social-Democrats; war waged in the name of a group of legalists who have completely broken with the R.S.D.L.P.—this is the program and tactics of the Stolypin labour party<sup>1</sup> which Messrs. Potresov, Levitsky, Larin and Co. are out to create. The real program and the real tactics of these people are expressed in precise terms in the above quotation—in contradistinction to their hypocritical official assurances that they are "*also* Social-Democrats," that they "*also*" belong to the "irreconcilable International." These assurances are but window dressings. Their deeds, their real social substance, are expressed in this program, which substitutes for Socialism a liberal labour policy.

Just note the ridiculous contradictions in which the reformists become involved. If, as Larin says, the bourgeois revolution in Russia has been completed, then the Socialist revolution should be on the order of the day. That is self-evident; it is clear to anyone who professes to be a Socialist not for the sake of deceiving the workers by a popular appellation. That is all the more reason why we should organize "for revolution" (for Socialist revolution), "in expectation" of a revolution, for the sake of the "hope" (not a vague "hope," but a *certainty*, based on precise and multiplying data of science) *for a Socialist revolution*.

But that's just the rub—for to the reformist the twaddle about the completed bourgeois revolution (like the twaddle about the Achilles' heel, etc., to Martov) is but a verbal screen to cover up his *renunciation of all revolution*. He renounces the bourgeois-democratic revolution on the pretext that it has been completed, or that it is "quite sufficient" to recognize the

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## THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

(Excerpt)

### VIII. KARL MARX THE UTOPIAN AND PRACTICAL ROSA LUXEMBURG<sup>1</sup>

While declaring the independence of Poland to be a "utopia" and repeating it *ad nauseam*, Rosa Luxemburg exclaims ironically: why not raise the demand for the independence of Ireland?

Evidently, "practical" Rosa Luxemburg is unaware of Karl Marx's attitude to the question of the independence of Ireland. It is worth while dwelling upon this, in order to show how a *definite* demand for national independence was analysed from a really Marxian and not an opportunist standpoint.

It was Marx's custom to "probe the teeth," as he expressed it, of his Socialist acquaintances, testing their intelligence and the strength of their convictions. Having made the acquaintance of Lopatin, Marx wrote to Engels on July 5, 1870, expressing a highly flattering opinion of the young Russian Socialist but adding at the same time:

"... *Poland* is his weak point. On this point he speaks quite like an Englishman—say, an English Chartist of the old school—about Ireland."

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1866 arrives. Marx writes to Engels about the "Proudhonist clique" in Paris which "...declares nationalities to be an absurdity and attacks Bismarck and Garibaldi. As polemics against chauvinism their tactics are useful and explicable. But when the believers in Proudhon (my good friends here, Lafargue and Longuet also belong to them) think that all Europe can and should sit quietly and peacefully on its behind until the gentlemen in France abolish poverty and ignorance... they become ridiculous." (Letter of June 7, 1866.)

"Yesterday," Marx writes on June 20, "there was a discussion in the International Council on the present war.... The discussion wound up, as was to be expected, with 'the question of nationality' in general and the attitude we should take towards it.... The representatives of 'Young France' (*non-workers*) came out with the announcement that all nationalities and even nations were 'antiquated prejudices.' Proudhonized Stirnerism.... The whole world waits until the French are ripe for a social revolution.... The English laughed very much when I began my speech by saying that our friend Lafargue, etc., who had done away with nationalities, had spoken 'French' to us, *i.e.*, a language which nine-tenths of the audience did not understand. I also suggested that by the negation of nationalities he appeared, quite unconsciously, to understand their absorption into the model French nation."

The conclusion that follows from all these critical remarks of Marx is clear: the working class should be the last to make a fetish of the national question, since the development of capitalism does not necessarily awaken *all* nations to independent life. But to brush aside the mass national movements once they have started and to refuse to support what is progressive in them means, in effect, pandering to *nationalistic* prejudices, *viz.*, recognizing "one's own" as the "model nation" (or, we will add, as the nation possessing the exclusive privilege of forming a state).<sup>1</sup>

But let us return to the question of Ireland.

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Let us note, by the way, Marx's letter to Engels of August 18, 1869:

"In Posen . . . the Polish workers . . . have brought a strike to a victorious end by the help of their colleagues in Berlin. This struggle against Monsieur le Capital—even in the subordinate form of the strike—is a very different way of getting rid of national prejudices from that of the bourgeois gentlemen with their peace declamations."

The policy on the Irish question pursued by Marx in the International may be seen from the following:

On November 18, 1869, Marx writes to Engels that he spoke for an hour and a quarter in the Council of the International on the question of the attitude of the British Ministry to the Irish amnesty and proposed the following resolutions:

"Resolved,

"that in his reply to the Irish demands for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots . . . Mr. Gladstone deliberately insults the Irish nation;

"that he clogs political amnesty with conditions alike degrading to the victims of misgovernment and the people they belong to;

"that having, in the teeth of his responsible position, publicly and enthusiastically cheered on the American slave-holders' rebellion, he now steps in to preach to the Irish people the doctrine of passive obedience;

"that his whole proceedings with reference to the Irish amnesty question are the true and genuine offspring of that '*policy of conquest*,' by the fiery denunciation of which Mr. Gladstone ousted his Tory rivals from office;

"that the *General Council* of the '*International Workingmen's Association*' express their admiration of the spirited, firm and high-souled manner in which the Irish people carry on their amnesty movement;

"that these resolutions be communicated to all branches of, and workmen's bodies connected with, the '*International Workingmen's Association*' in Europe and America."

On December 10, 1869, Marx writes that his paper on the Irish question to be read at the Council of the International will be framed on the following lines:

" . . . quite apart from all phrases about '*international*' and '*humane justice for Ireland*'—which are to be taken for granted in the *International Council*—it is in the direct and absolute interest of the English working class to get rid of their present connection with Ireland. And this is my

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What were the theoretical grounds for Marx's conclusion? In England the bourgeois revolution had been consummated long ago. But it had not yet been consummated in Ireland; it is being consummated now, after the lapse of half a century, by the reforms of the English Liberals. If capitalism had been overthrown in England as quickly as Marx at first expected, there would have been no room for a bourgeois-democratic and general national movement in Ireland. But since it had arisen, Marx advised the English workers to support it, to give it a revolutionary impetus and lead it to a final issue in the interests of *their own* liberty.

The economic ties between Ireland and England in the 1860's were, of course, even closer than Russia's present ties with Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The "impracticability" and "impossibility" of the separation of Ireland (if only owing to geographical conditions and England's immense colonial power) were quite obvious. While, in principle, an enemy of federalism, Marx in this instance agrees also to federation,<sup>1</sup> *so long as* the emancipation of Ireland is achieved in a revolutionary and not in a reformist way, through the movement of the mass of the people of Ireland supported by the working class of England. There can be no doubt that only such a solution of the historical problem would be in the best interests of the proletariat and most favourable for rapid social development.

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## THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE SLOGAN

In No. 40 of the *Sotsial-Demokrat* we reported that the conference of the foreign sections of our Party had decided to defer the question of the "United States of Europe" slogan pending a discussion in the press on the *economic* side of the question.

The debate on this question at our conference assumed a one-sidedly political character. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that the Manifesto of the Central Committee directly formulated this slogan as a political one ("the immediate *political* slogan..." it says there), and not only did it put forward the slogan of a republican United States of Europe, but expressly emphasized the point that this slogan would be senseless and false "without the revolutionary overthrow of the German, Austrian and Russian monarchies."

It would be absolutely wrong to object to such a presentation of the question *merely* from the standpoint of a political estimation of the particular slogan—as for instance, that it obscures or weakens, etc., the slogan of a Socialist revolution. Political changes of a truly democratic trend, and political revolutions all the more, can never under any circumstances obscure or weaken the slogan of a Socialist revolution. On the contrary, they always bring it nearer, widen the basis for it, draw new sections of the petty bourgeoisie and the semi-proletarian masses into the Socialist struggle. On the other hand, political revolutions are inevitable in the course of the Socialist revolution, which must not be regarded as a single act, but as an epoch of turbulent political and economic upheavals of the most acute class struggle, civil war, revolutions and counter-revolutions.

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This is how the plunder of about a billion of the earth's population by a handful of Great Powers is organized in the epoch of the highest development of capitalism. No other organization is possible under capitalism. Give up colonies, "spheres of influence," export of capital? To think that this is possible means sinking to the level of some mediocre parson who preaches to the rich every Sunday about the lofty principles of Christianity and advises them to give to the poor, if not several billions, at least several hundred rubles yearly.

A United States of Europe under capitalism is tantamount to an agreement to divide up the colonies. Under capitalism, however, no other basis, no other principle of division is possible except force. A billionaire cannot share the "national income" of a capitalist country with anyone except in proportion to the capital invested (with an extra bonus thrown in, so that the largest capital may receive more than its due). Capitalism is private property in the means of production, and anarchy in production. To preach a "just" division of income on such a basis is Proudhonism, is stupid philistinism. Division cannot take place except in "proportion to strength." And strength changes with the progress of economic development. After 1871 Germany grew strong three or four times faster than England and France; Japan, about ten times faster than Russia. There is and there can be no other way of testing the real strength of a capitalist state than that of war. War does not contradict the principles of private property—on the contrary, it is a direct and inevitable outcome of those principles. Under capitalism the even economic growth of individual enterprises, or individual states, is impossible. Under capitalism, there are no other means of restoring the periodically disturbed equilibrium than crises in industry and wars of politics.

Of course, *temporary* agreements between capitalists and between the Powers are possible. In this sense a United States of Europe is possible as an agreement between the *European* capitalists... but what for? Only for the purpose of jointly suppressing Socialism in Europe, of jointly protecting colonies against Japan and America, which

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*all* phenomena and processes of nature (*including* mind and society). The condition for the knowledge of all processes of the world in their "*self-movement*," in their spontaneous development, in their real life, is the knowledge of them as a unity of opposites. Development is the "struggle" of opposites. The two basic (or two possible? or two historically observable?) conceptions of development (evolution) are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition, *and* development as a unity of opposites (the division of the one into mutually exclusive opposites and their reciprocal relation).

In the first conception of motion, *self-movement*, its *driving* force, its source, its motive, remains in the shade (or this source is made *external*—God, subject, etc.). In the second conception it is to the knowledge of the *source* of "*self*"-movement that attention is chiefly directed.

The first conception is lifeless, poor and dry. The second is vital. The second *alone* furnishes the key to the "self-movement" of everything in existence; it alone furnishes the key to the "leaps," to the "break in continuity," to the "transformation into the opposite," to the destruction of the old and the emergence of the new.

The unity (coincidence, identity, resultant) of opposites is conditional, temporary, transitory, relative. The struggle of mutually exclusive opposites is absolute, just as development and motion are absolute.

N.B. The distinction between subjectivism (scepticism, sophistry, etc.) and dialectics, incidentally, is that in (objective) dialectics the difference between the relative and the absolute is itself relative. To objective dialectics there is an absolute even *within* the relative. To subjectivism and sophistry the relative is only relative and excludes the absolute.

In his *Capital*, Marx first analyses the simplest, most ordinary, fundamental, most common and everyday *relation* of bourgeois (commodity) society, a relation that is encountered billions of times, *viz.*, the exchange of commodities. In this very simple phenomenon (in this "cell" of bourgeois society) analysis reveals *all* the contradictions (or the germs of *all* the contradictions) of modern society. The subsequent exposition shows us the development (*both* growth *and* movement) of

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instance) objective nature with the same qualities, the transformation of the singular into the general, of the contingent into the necessary, transitions, modulations, and the reciprocal connection of opposites. Dialectics *is* the theory of knowledge of (Hegel and) Marxism. This is the "side" of the matter (it is not "a side" but the *essence* of the matter) to which Plekhanov, not to speak of other Marxists, paid no attention.

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"Circles" in philosophy: (is a chronology of *persons* essential? No!)

Ancient: from Democritus to Plato and the dialectics of Heraclitus.

Renaissance: Descartes versus Gassendi (Spinoza?).

Modern: Holbach—Hegel (via Berkeley, Hume, Kant).

Hegel—Feuerbach—Marx.

Dialectics as a *living*, many-sided knowledge (with the number of sides eternally increasing) with an infinite number of shadings of every sort of approach and approximation to reality (with a philosophical system growing into a whole out of each shade)—here we have an immeasurably rich content as compared with "metaphysical" materialism, the fundamental *misfortune* of which is its inability to apply dialectics to the *Bildertheorie*,<sup>2</sup> to the process and development of knowledge.

Philosophical idealism is *only* nonsense from the standpoint of crude, simple, metaphysical materialism. On the other hand, from the standpoint of *dialectical* materialism, philosophical idealism is a *one-sided*, exaggerated, *überschwengliches*<sup>3</sup> (Dietzgen) development (inflation, distention) of one of the fea-

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# THE SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS TO SELF-DETERMINATION

(Excerpt)

## 5. MARXISM AND PROUDHONISM ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

In contrast to the petty-bourgeois democrats, Marx regarded every democratic demand without exception not as an absolute, but as an historical expression of the struggle of the masses of the people, led by the bourgeoisie, against feudalism. There is not one of these demands which could not serve and has not served, under certain circumstances, as an instrument of the bourgeoisie for deceiving the workers. To single out in this respect one of the demands of political democracy, namely, the self-determination of nations, and to oppose it to all the rest is fundamentally wrong in theory. In practice, the proletariat can retain its independence only by subordinating its struggle for all the democratic demands, not excluding the demand for a republic, to its revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

On the other hand, in contrast to the Proudhonists who "denied" the national problem "in the name of social revolution," Marx, mindful most of all the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat in the advanced countries, put in the foreground the fundamental principle of internationalism and Socialism, *viz.*, that no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations. It was from the standpoint of the interests of the revolutionary movement of the German workers that Marx in 1848 demanded that victorious democracy in Germany should

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## THE DISCUSSION OF SELF-DETERMINATION SUMMED UP

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### 7. MARXISM OR PROUDHONISM?

Quite as an exception, our Polish comrades parry our reference to Marx's attitude towards the separation of Ireland not by inference but directly. What is their objection? References to the position Marx held from 1848 to 1871, they say, are "not of the slightest value." The argument advanced in support of this unusually irate and positive assertion is that Marx "at one and the same time" expressed opposition to the strivings for independence of the "Czechs, South Slavs, etc."

The argument is so very irate because it is so very unsound. According to the Polish Marxists, Marx was simply a muddle-head who "at one and the same time" said contradictory things! This is altogether untrue, and it is altogether un-Marxist. The "concrete" analysis upon which our Polish comrades insist, *but do not themselves apply*, obliges us to investigate whether the different attitudes Marx adopted towards different concrete "national" movements did not spring from *one and the same* Socialist philosophy.

As is generally known, Marx was in favour of Polish independence in the interests of *European* democracy in its struggle against the power and influence—we may say, against the omnipotence and predominating reactionary influence—of tsarism. That this attitude was correct was most clearly and practically demonstrated in 1849, when the Russian serf army crushed the national liberation and revolutionary-democratic rebellion in Hungary. From that time until Marx's death, and even later, until 1890, when there was a danger that tsarism,

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words while discarding it in practice—we must analyse them concretely and draw invaluable lessons from them for the future. The various demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not absolute, but a *small part* of the general democratic (now: general Socialist) *world* movement. In individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected. It is possible that the republican movement in one country may be merely an instrument of the clerical or financial-monarchical intrigues of other countries; if so, we must *not* support this particular, concrete movement. But it would be ridiculous on these grounds to delete the demand for a republic from the program of international Social-Democracy.

In what way has the concrete situation changed from 1848-71 to 1898-1916 (I take the most important landmarks of imperialism as a period: from the Spanish-American imperialist war to the European imperialist war)? Tsarism has obviously and incontrovertibly ceased to be the chief mainstay of reaction, firstly, because it is supported by international finance capital, particularly French, secondly, because of 1905. At that time the system of big national states—the democracies of Europe—was conferring democracy and Socialism on the world in spite of tsarism.<sup>1</sup> Marx and Engels did not live to see the period of imperialism. At the present time a system of a handful of imperialist "Great" Powers (five or six in number) has come into being, each of which oppresses other nations; and this oppression is one of the sources of the artificial retardation of the collapse of capitalism, of the artificial support of opportunism and social-chauvinism in the imperialist nations which dominate the world. At that time West European democracy, which was liberating the big nations, was opposed

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This, the most important aspect of the question, is ignored by our Polish comrades, who do *not* view things from the central position in the epoch of imperialism, from the standpoint that the international proletariat is divided into two camps.

Here are other concrete examples of their Proudhonism. 1) their attitude to the Irish rebellion of 1916, of which we shall speak later; 2) the declaration in the theses (II, 3, at the end of § 3) that the slogan of Socialist revolution “must not be covered up by anything.” To think that the slogan of Socialist revolution can be “covered up” by *combining* it with a consistently revolutionary position on all questions, including the national question, is certainly profoundly anti-Marxist.

The Polish Social-Democrats consider that our program is a “national-reformist” program. Compare the two practical proposals: 1) for autonomy (Polish theses, III, 4), and 2) for freedom of secession. It is here, and here alone, that our programs differ! And is it not evident that the first proposal is reformist and not the second? A reformist change is one which leaves the foundations of the power of the ruling class intact and which is merely a concession by the ruling class that leaves its power unimpaired. A revolutionary change undermines the foundations of power. A reformist change in the national program does *not* abolish *all* privileges of the ruling nation; it does *not* establish complete equality; it does *not* abolish national oppression *in all its forms*. An “autonomous” nation does not enjoy equal rights with the “ruling” nation; our Polish comrades could not have failed to notice this had they not obstinately avoided (like our old “Economist”) an analysis of *political* concepts and categories. Until 1905 autonomous Norway, as a part

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the democracy of *several* and of *all* countries. Let us assume that between two great monarchies there is a little monarchy whose kinglet is "bound" by blood and other ties to the monarchs of both neighbouring countries. Let us further assume that the declaration of a republic in the little country and the expulsion of *its* monarch would in practice lead to a war between the two neighbouring great nations for the restoration of some monarch or other in the little country. There is no doubt that in this case all international Social-Democracy, as well as the really internationalist section of Social-Democracy in the little country, *would be opposed to substituting a republic for the monarchy*. The substitution of a republic for a monarchy is not an absolute, but one of the democratic demands, a demand subordinated to the interests of democracy (and still more, of course, to the interests of the Socialist proletariat) as a whole. In all probability a case like this would not give rise to the slightest disagreement between Social-Democrats in any country. But if any Social-Democrat were to propose on *these* grounds that the demand for a republic be deleted altogether from the program of international Social-Democracy, he would certainly be looked upon as insane. He would be told that the elementary logical difference between the *particular* and the *general* must not be forgotten.

This example brings us, from a somewhat different angle, to the question of the *internationalist* education of the working class. Can such education—about the necessity and urgent importance of which differences of opinion among the Zimmerwald Lefts<sup>1</sup> are inconceivable—be *concretely identical* in great, oppressing nations and in small, oppressed nations, in annexing nations and in annexed nations?

Obviously not. The way to the one goal—to complete equality, to the closest intimacy and the subsequent *amalgamation of all* nations—obviously proceeds here by different routes in each concrete case; in the same way, let us say, as the route to a point in the middle of a given page lies towards

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People who have not gone thoroughly into the question think that there is a "contradiction" in Social-Democrats of oppressing nations insisting on "freedom of *secession*," while Social-Democrats of oppressed nations insist on "freedom of *union*." However, a little reflection will show that there is not, nor can there be, any *other* road leading from the *given* situation to internationalism and the amalgamation of nations. any other road to this goal....

## 9. ENGELS' LETTER TO KAUTSKY

In his pamphlet *Socialism and Colonial Politics* (Berlin, 1907) Kautsky, who was then still a Marxist, published a letter written to him by Engels, dated September 12, 1882, which is extremely interesting in relation to the question under discussion. Here is the principal part of that letter:

"...In my opinion the colonies proper, *i.e.*, the countries occupied by a European population, Canada, the Cape, Australia, will all become independent; on the other hand, the countries inhabited by a native population, which are simply subjugated; India, Algiers, the Dutch, Portuguese and Spanish possessions, must be taken over for the time being by the proletariat and led as rapidly as possible towards independence. How this process will develop it is difficult to say. India will perhaps, indeed very probably, make a revolution, and as the proletariat emancipating itself cannot conduct any colonial wars, this would have to be given full scope; this, of course, would not pass off without all sorts of destruction, but that sort of thing is inseparable from all revolutions. The same might also take place elsewhere, *e.g.*, in Algiers and Egypt, and would certainly be the best thing *for us*. We shall have enough to do at home. Once Europe is reorganized, and North America, that will furnish such colossal power and such an example that the semi-civilized countries will follow in their wake of their own accord. Economic needs alone will be responsible for this. But

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## IMPERIALISM AND THE SPLIT IN SOCIALISM

Is there any connection between imperialism and that monstrous and disgusting victory which opportunism (in the form of social-chauvinism) has gained over the labour movement in Europe?

This is the fundamental question of modern Socialism. And having in our Party literature fully established, first, the imperialist character of our epoch and of the present war, and, second, the inseparable historical connection between social-chauvinism and opportunism, as well as the intrinsic similarity of their political ideology, we can and must proceed to analyse this fundamental question.

We must begin with as precise and full a definition of imperialism as possible. Imperialism is a specific historical stage of capitalism. Its specific character is threefold: imperialism is 1) monopoly capitalism; 2) parasitic, or decaying capitalism; 3) moribund capitalism. The substitution of monopoly for free competition is the fundamental economic feature, the *quintessence* of imperialism. Monopoly manifests itself in five principal forms: 1) cartels, syndicates and trusts—the concentration of production has reached a stage which gives rise to these monopolistic combinations of capitalists; 2) the monopolistic position of the big banks—three, four or five gigantic banks manipulate the whole economic life of America, France, Germany; 3) seizure of the sources of *raw material* by the trusts and the financial oligarchy (finance capital is monopolistic industrial capital merged with bank capital); 4) the (economic) partition of the world by the international cartels *has begun*. Such international cartels, which command the *entire* world market and divide it “amicably” among themselves—until war

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stressed this profound observation of Sismondi. Imperialism somewhat changes the situation. A privileged upper stratum of the proletariat in the imperialist countries lives partly at the expense of hundreds of millions of members of uncivilized nations.

It is clear why imperialism is *moribund* capitalism, capitalism in *transition* to Socialism: monopoly, which grows out of capitalism, is *already* capitalism dying out, the beginning of its transition to Socialism. The tremendous *socialization* of labour by imperialism (what the apologists—the bourgeois economists—call “interlocking”) means the same thing.

Advancing this definition of imperialism brings us into complete contradiction to K. Kautsky, who refuses to regard imperialism as a “phase of capitalism,” and who defines imperialism as the *policy* “preferred” by finance capital, as a tendency on the part of “industrial” countries to annex “agrarian” countries.<sup>1</sup> Kautsky’s definition is thoroughly false from the theoretical standpoint. What distinguishes imperialism is the rule *not* of industrial capital but of finance capital, the striving to annex *not* agrarian countries particularly, but *every kind* of country. Kautsky *divorces* imperialist politics from imperialist economics, he divorces monopoly in politics from monopoly in economics in order to pave the way for his vulgar bourgeois reformism, such as “disarmament,” “ultra-imperialism” and similar nonsense. The aim and object of this theoretical falsity is to gloss over the *most profound* contradictions of imperialism and thus to justify the theory of “unity” with the apologists of imperialism, the frank social-chauvinists and opportunists.

We have dealt at sufficient length with Kautsky’s rupture with Marxism on this point in the *Sotsial-Demokrat* and the *Kommunist*. Our Russian Kautskyans, the supporters of the Organization Committee,<sup>2</sup> headed by Axelrod and Spectator, including even Marlov. and to a large degree Trotsky, pre-

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great standing armies are placed under British commanders; almost all the fighting associated with our African dominions, except in the southern part, has been done for us by natives."

The prospect of the partition of China elicited from Hobson the following economic appraisal: "The greater part of Western Europe might then assume the appearance and character already exhibited by tracts of country in the South of England, in the Riviera, and in the tourist-ridden or residential parts of Italy and Switzerland, little clusters of wealthy aristocrats drawing dividends and pensions from the Far East, with a somewhat larger group of professional retainers and tradesmen and a large body of personal servants and workers in the transport trade and in the final stages of production of more perishable goods: all the main arterial industries would have disappeared, the staple foods and manufactures flowing in as a tribute from Asia and Africa. . . . We have foreshadowed the possibility of even a larger alliance of Western States, a European federation of Great Powers which, so far from forwarding the cause of world civilization, might introduce the gigantic peril of a Western parasitism, a group of advanced industrial nations, whose upper classes drew vast tribute from Asia and Africa, with which they supported great tame masses of retainers, no longer engaged in the staple industries of agriculture and manufacture, but kept in the performance of personal or minor industrial services under the control of a new financial aristocracy. Let those who would scout such a theory [he should have said: prospect] as undeserving of consideration, examine the economic and social conditions of districts in Southern England today which are already reduced to this condition, and reflect upon the vast extension of such a system which might be rendered feasible by the subjection of China to the economic control of similar groups of financiers, investors, and political and business officials, draining the greatest potential reservoir of profit the world has ever known, in order to consume it in Europe. The situation is far too complex, the play of world forces far too incalculable, to render this or any other single interpretation of the future very probable: but the influences which govern the imperialism of Western Europe today are

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But as a matter of fact all these Kautskyans—Hilferding, the O.C.-ists, Martov and Co.—are *optimists* ... with regard to *opportunism*. That is the whole point!

The proletariat is the child of capitalism—of world capitalism, and not only of European capitalism, not only of imperialist capitalism. On a world scale, fifty years sooner or fifty years later—from the standpoint of the *world* scale the question is a minor one—the "proletariat" of course "will be" united, and revolutionary Social-Democracy will "inevitably" be victorious within it. But this is not the point, Messrs. the Kautskyans. The point is that at the present time, in the imperialist countries of Europe, *you are fawning* on the opportunists, who are *alien* to the proletariat as a class, who are the servants, the agents and the vehicles of the influence of the bourgeoisie, and unless the labour movement *rids* itself of them, it will remain a *bourgeois labour movement*. Your advocacy of "unity" with the opportunists, with the Legiens and Davids, the Plekhanovs, the Chkhenskis and Potresovs, etc., is, objectively, a defence of the *enslavement* of the workers by the imperialist bourgeoisie with the aid of its best agents in the labour movement. The victory of revolutionary Social-Democracy on a world scale is absolutely inevitable, only it is moving and will move, is proceeding and will proceed, *against* you, it will be a victory *over* you.

These two tendencies, one might even say *two* parties, in the present-day labour movement, which in 1914-16 so obviously parted ways all over the world, *were traced by Engels and Marx in England* throughout the course of many *decades*; roughly from 1858 to 1892.

Neither Marx nor Engels lived to see the imperialist epoch of world capitalism, which began not earlier than 1898-1900. But it has been a peculiar feature of England that even in the middle of the nineteenth century she already revealed at least *two* highly outstanding characteristics of imperialism: 1) vast colonies, and 2) monopoly profit (due to her monopolistic position in the world market). In both respects England at that

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That these ideas, which were repeated by Engels over the course of decades, were also expressed by him publicly, in the press, is proven by his preface to the second edition of *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1892. Here he speaks of an “aristocracy in the working class,” of a “privileged minority of the workers,” in contradistinction to the “broad masses of the workers.” “A small, privileged, protected minority” of the working class alone was “permanently benefited” by the privileged position of England in 1848-68, whereas “the great bulk of them experienced at best but a temporary improvement.” “With the breakdown of that [England’s industrial] monopoly, the English working class will lose that privileged position....” The members of the “New Unionism,” the unions of the unskilled workers, “had this immense advantage, that their minds were virgin soil, entirely free from the inherited ‘respectable’ bourgeois prejudices which hampered the brains of the better situated ‘old’ Unionists....” “The so-called labour representatives [in England] are those who are forgiven for belonging to the working class because they are themselves ready to drown this quality in the ocean of their liberalism....”

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If this were so, Kautsky's "theory" of conciliation (with the opportunists) would to a certain extent be justified. But as a matter of fact it is *not* so. Imperialism *is* monopoly capitalism. Every cartel, trust, syndicate, every giant bank *is* a monopoly. Super-profits have not disappeared; they still remain. The exploitation of *all* other countries by one privileged, financially wealthy country remains and has become more intense. A handful of wealthy countries—there are only four of them, if we mean independent, really gigantic, "modern" wealth: England, France, the United States and Germany—have developed monopoly to vast proportions, they obtain *super*-profits amounting to hundreds of millions, if not billions, they "ride on the backs" of hundreds and hundreds of millions of people in other countries and fight among themselves for the division of the particularly rich, particularly fat and particularly easy spoils.

This in fact is the economic and political essence of imperialism, the profound contradictions of which Kautsky covers up instead of exposing.

The bourgeoisie of an imperialist "Great" Power *can* economically bribe the upper strata of "its" workers by devoting a hundred million francs a year or so to this purpose, for its *super*-profits most likely amount to about a billion. And how this little sop is distributed among the labour ministers, "labour representatives" (remember Engels' splendid analysis of this term), labour members of War Industry Committees, labour officials, workers belonging to the narrow craft unions, office employees, etc., etc., is a secondary question.

Between 1848 and 1868, and to a certain extent even later, England alone enjoyed a monopoly: *that is why* opportunism could prevail in England for decades. There were *no* other countries possessing either very rich colonies or an industrial monopoly.

The last third of the nineteenth century was marked by the transition to the new imperialist epoch. Monopoly is enjoyed

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On the economic basis referred to, the political institutions of modern capitalism—press, parliament, trade unions, congresses, etc.—have created *political* privileges and sops for the respectful, meek, reformist and patriotic office employees and workers corresponding to the economic privileges and sops. Lucrative and soft jobs in the Cabinet or on the War Industry Committee, in Parliament and on diverse committees, on the editorial staffs of "respectable," legally published newspapers or on the management councils of no less respectable and "bourgeois law-abiding" trade unions—these are the baits by which the imperialist bourgeoisie attracts and rewards the representatives and adherents of the "bourgeois labour parties."

The mechanics of political democracy work in the same direction. Nothing in our times can be done without elections; nothing can be done without the masses. And in this era of printing and parliamentarism it is *impossible* to gain the following of the masses without a widely-ramified, systematically-managed, well-equipped system of flattery, lies, fraud, juggling with popular catchwords and promising reforms and blessings to the workers right and left—as long as they renounce the revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. I would call this system Lloyd-Georgeism, after the name of one of the foremost and most dexterous representatives of this system in the classic land of the "bourgeois labour party," the English Minister, Lloyd George. A first-class bourgeois man-of-affairs, an astute politician, a popular orator who will deliver any speeches you like, even r-r-revolutionary ones, to a la-

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*Dyelo* and *Golos Truda*, in Russia, and the O.C.-ists abroad are nothing but varieties of one *such* party. There is not the slightest reason for thinking that these parties will disappear *before* the social revolution. On the contrary, the nearer the revolution approaches, the more strongly it flares up and the more sudden and violent the transitions and leaps in its progress, the greater will be the part played in the labour movement by the struggle of the revolutionary mass stream against the opportunist petty-bourgeois stream. Kautskyism is not an independent current, because it has no hold either on the masses or on the privileged stratum which has deserted to the bourgeoisie. But the danger of Kautskyism lies in the fact that, utilizing the ideology of the past, it endeavours to reconcile the proletariat to the "bourgeois labour party," to preserve the unity of the proletariat with that party and thereby enhance the prestige of the latter. The masses no longer follow the lead of the avowed social-chauvinists: Lloyd George has been hissed down at workers' meetings in England; Hyndman has resigned from the Party; the Renaudels and Scheidemanns, the Potresovs and Gvozdevs are protected by the police. The masked defence of the social-chauvinists by the Kautskyans is much more dangerous.

One of the most common sophistries of Kautsky is its reference to the "masses." We do not want, they say, to break away from the masses and mass organizations! But just think how Engels put the question. In the nineteenth century the "mass organizations" of the English trade unions were on the side of the bourgeois labour party. Marx and Engels did not reconcile themselves to it on this ground, but exposed it. They did not forget, firstly, that the trade union organizations directly embraced a *minority of the proletariat*. In England then, as in Germany now, not more than one-fifth of the proletariat was organized. It cannot be seriously thought that it is possible to organize the majority of the proletariat under capitalism. Secondly—and this is the main point—it is not so much a question of the size of an organization, as of the real, the objective meaning of its policy: does this policy represent the masses, does it serve the masses, *i. e.*, does it aim at the liberation of the masses from capitalism, or does it represent

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# THE WAR PROGRAM OF THE PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

(Excerpt)

In Holland, Scandinavia and Switzerland, voices are heard among the revolutionary Social-Democrats—who are combating the social-chauvinist lies about “defence of the fatherland” in the present imperialist war—in favour of substituting for the old point in the Social-Democratic minimum program: “militia, or the armed nation,” a new one: “disarmament.” The *Jugendinternationale* (*The Youth International*) has inaugurated a discussion on this question and has published in No. 3 an editorial article in favour of disarmament. In R. Grimm’s latest theses, we regret to note, there is also a concession to the “disarmament” idea. Discussions have been started in the periodicals *Neues Leben* and *Vorbote*.

Let us examine the position of the advocates of disarmament.

## I

The main argument is that the demand for disarmament is the clearest, most decisive, most consistent expression of the struggle against all militarism and against all war.

But this main argument is precisely the principal error of the advocates of disarmament. Socialists cannot, without ceasing to be Socialists, be opposed to all war.

In the first place, Socialists have never been, nor can they be, opposed to revolutionary wars. The bourgeoisie of the imperialist “Great” Powers has become thoroughly reactionary, and we regard the war which *this* bourgeoisie is now waging

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To deny all possibility of national wars under imperialism is wrong in theory, obviously mistaken historically, and in practice is tantamount to European chauvinism: we who belong to nations that oppress hundreds of millions of people in Europe, Africa, Asia, etc., must tell the oppressed peoples that it is "impossible" for them to wage war against "our" nations!

Secondly, civil wars are also wars. Anyone who recognizes the class struggle cannot fail to recognize civil wars, which in every class society are the natural, and under certain conditions, inevitable continuation, development and intensification of the class struggle. All the great revolutions prove this. To repudiate civil war, or to forget about it, would mean sinking into extreme opportunism and renouncing the Socialist revolution.

Thirdly, the victory of Socialism in one country does not at one stroke eliminate all war in general. On the contrary, it presupposes such wars. The development of capitalism proceeds extremely unevenly in the various countries. It cannot be otherwise under the commodity production system. From this it follows irrefutably that Socialism cannot achieve victory simultaneously in *all* countries. It will achieve victory first in one or several countries, while the others will remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois for some time. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the Socialist country. In such cases a war on our part would be a legitimate and just war. It would be a war for Socialism, for the liberation of other nations from the bourgeoisie. Engels was perfectly right when, in his letter to Kautsky, September 12, 1882, he openly admitted that it was possible for *already victorious* Socialism to wage "defensive wars." What he had in mind was defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries.

Only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished, and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not only of one country, will wars become impossible. And from a scientific point of view it would be utterly wrong and utterly unrevolutionary for us to evade or gloss over the most important thing, namely, that the most difficult task, the one demanding the greatest amount of fighting in the transition to Socialism,

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# THE TASKS OF THE PROLETARIAT IN OUR REVOLUTION

DRAFT OF A PLATFORM FOR THE PROLETARIAN PARTY

(Excerpt)

## A SCIENTIFICALLY SOUND NAME FOR OUR PARTY THAT WILL POLITICALLY HELP TO CLARIFY PROLETARIAN CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS

19. I now come to the last point, the name of our Party. We must call ourselves a *Communist Party*—just as Marx and Engels called themselves.

We must repeat that we are Marxists and that we take as our basis the *Communist Manifesto*, which has been perverted and betrayed by the Social-Democrats on two main points: 1) the workers have no country; “defence of the fatherland” in an imperialist war is a betrayal of Socialism; and 2) the Marxist doctrine of the state which has been perverted by the Second International.

The term “Social-Democracy” is *scientifically* incorrect, as Marx frequently pointed out, in particular, in the *Critique of the Gotha Program* in 1875, and as Engels reaffirmed in a more popular form in 1894. From capitalism mankind can pass directly only to Socialism, *i.e.*, to the social ownership of the means of production and the distribution of products according to the amount of work performed by each individual. Our Party looks farther ahead: Socialism is bound to pass gradually into Communism, upon the banner of which is inscribed the motto, “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

That is my first argument.

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That is my first argument.



We must look forward, and not backward to the usual bourgeois type of democracy, which consolidated the rule of the bourgeoisie with the aid of the old, *monarchist* organs of government—the police, the army and the bureaucracy.

We must look forward to the new democracy which is in process of being born, and which is already ceasing to be a democracy. For democracy means the rule of the people, whereas the armed people cannot rule over themselves.

The term democracy is not only scientifically incorrect when applied to a Communist Party; it has now, since March 1917, simply become a *blinker* covering the eyes of the revolutionary people and *preventing* them from boldly and freely, on their own initiative, building up the new: the Soviets of Workers', Peasants', and all other Deputies, as *the sole power* in the "state" and as the harbinger of the "withering away" of the state *in every form*.

My fourth argument: we must reckon with the actual situation in which Socialism finds itself internationally.

It is not what it was during the years 1871 to 1914, when Marx and Engels consciously reconciled themselves to the inaccurate, opportunist term "Social-Democracy." For *in those days*, after the defeat of the Paris Commune, history demanded slow organizational and educational work. Nothing else was possible. The Anarchists were then (as they are now) fundamentally wrong not only theoretically, but also economically and politically. The Anarchists wrongly estimated the character of the times, for they did not understand the world situation: the worker of England corrupted by imperialist profits, the Commune defeated in Paris, the recent (1871) triumph of the bourgeois national movement in Germany, the age-long sleep of semi-feudal Russia.

Marx and Engels gauged the times accurately; they understood the international situation; they realized that the approach to the beginning of the social revolution must be *slow*.

We, in our turn, must also understand the peculiarities and the tasks of the new era. Let us not imitate those sorry Marxists of whom Marx said: "I have sown dragons and have reaped a harvest of fleas."

The objective needs of capitalism grown into imperialism

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have grown used to the name, the workers have learnt to "love" *their* Social-Democratic Party.

That is the only argument. But it is an argument that disregards the science of Marxism, the tasks of the immediate morrow in the revolution, the objective position of world Socialism, the shameful collapse of the Second International, and the injury done to the practical cause by the pack of "also-Social-Democrats" who surround the proletarians.

It is an argument of routine, an argument of somnolence, an argument of inertia.

But we are out to rebuild the world. We are out to put an end to the imperialist World War in which hundreds of millions of people and the interests of billions and billions of capital are involved, and which cannot end in a truly democratic peace without a proletarian revolution, the greatest in the history of mankind.

Yet we are afraid of our own selves. We are loth to cast off the "dear old" soiled shirt. . . .

But it is time to cast off the soiled shirt and don a clean one.

Petrograd, April 10, 1917

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slogan, the "order of the day," at *this* moment to be: "Workers, you have displayed marvels of proletarian heroism, the heroism of the people, in the civil war against tsardom. You must now display marvels of organization, organization of the proletariat and of the whole people, in order to prepare the way for your victory in the second stage of the revolution." (*Pravda*, No. 15.)

In what does the first stage consist?

In the transfer of the power of state to the bourgeoisie.

Before the February-March Revolution of 1917, state power in Russia was in the hands of one old class, namely, the feudal landed nobility, headed by Nicholas Romanov.

Now, after that revolution, the power is in the hands of *another* class, a new class, namely, the *bourgeoisie*.

The transfer of state power from one *class* to another *class* is the first, the principal, the basic sign of a *revolution*, both in the strictly scientific and in the practical political meaning of the term.

To this extent, the bourgeois, or the bourgeois-democratic, revolution in Russia *has been completed*.

At this point we hear the clamour of the objectors, of those who so readily call themselves "old Bolsheviks": Did we not always maintain, they say, that the bourgeois-democratic revolution is completed only by the "revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry"? Has the agrarian revolution, which is also a bourgeois-democratic revolution, been completed? Is it not a fact, on the contrary, that it has *not even begun*?

My answer is: The Bolshevik slogans and ideas *in general* have been fully corroborated by history; but *concretely*, things have shaped *differently* from what could have been anticipated [by anyone]: they are more original, more peculiar, more variegated.

If we ignored or forgot this fact, we should resemble those "old Bolsheviks" who have more than once played so sorry a part in the history of our Party by repeating meaninglessly a formula *learnt by rote*, instead of *studying* the specific features of the new and living reality.

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"Theory, my friend, is grey, but green is the eternal tree of life."<sup>1</sup>

He who continues to regard the "completion" of the bourgeois revolution *in the old way*, sacrifices living Marxism to the dead letter.

According to the old conception, the rule of the proletariat and the peasantry, their dictatorship, can and must come *after* the rule of the bourgeoisie.

But in actual fact, it has *already* turned out *differently*: an extremely original, novel and unprecedented *interlacing of the one with the other* has taken place. We have existing side by side, together, simultaneously, *both* the rule of the bourgeoisie [the government of Lvov and Guchkov] *and* a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry *voluntarily* ceding power to the bourgeoisie, voluntarily transforming itself into an appendage of the bourgeoisie.

For it must not be forgotten that in Petrograd the power is actually in the hands of the workers and soldiers: the new government is *not* using and cannot use violence against them, for there is *no* police, *no* army separate from the people, *no* officialdom standing omnipotently *above* the people. This is a fact; and it is precisely the kind of fact that is characteristic of a state of the type of the Paris Commune. This fact does not fit into the old schemes. One must know how to adapt schemes to facts, rather than repeat words about a "dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry" *in general*, which have now become meaningless.

In order the better to illuminate the question, let us approach it from another angle.

A Marxist must not abandon the ground of careful analysis of class relations. The bourgeoisie is in power. But is not the mass of the peasants *also* a bourgeoisie, only of a different stratum, a different kind, a different character? Whence does it follow that *this* stratum *cannot* come to power and thus "complete" the bourgeois-democratic revolution? Why should this be impossible?

That is how the old Bolsheviks often argue.

<sup>1</sup> The words quoted by Mephistopheles in Goethe's *Faust*.—Ed.

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Many things are possible. It would be a profound mistake to forget the agrarian movement and the agrarian program. But it would be equally mistaken to forget *reality*, and reality reveals the *fact* that an *agreement*, or—to use a more exact, less legal, but more class-economic expression—*class collaboration* exists between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

When this fact ceases to be a fact, when the peasantry separates from the bourgeoisie, seizes the land and the power despite the bourgeoisie, that will be a new stage of the bourgeois-democratic revolution; and of that we shall speak separately.

A Marxist who, in view of the possibility of such a stage in the future, were to forget his duties *at the present moment*, when the peasantry is *in agreement* with the bourgeoisie, would become a petty-bourgeois. For he would in practice be preaching to the proletariat *confidence* in the petty-bourgeoisie ["the petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry, must separate from the bourgeoisie while the bourgeois-democratic revolution is still on"]. Because of the "possibility" of so pleasant and sweet a future, in which the peasantry would *not* form the tail of the bourgeoisie, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis and Steklovs would *not* be an appendage of the bourgeois government—because of the "possibility" of so pleasant a future, he would be forgetting *the unpleasant present*, in which the peasantry still forms the tail of the bourgeoisie, and in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats have not yet ceased to be an appendage of the bourgeois government, His Majesty Lvov's<sup>1</sup> Opposition.

This hypothetical person would resemble a meek Louis Blanc, or a saccharine Kautskyan, but not a revolutionary Marxist.

But are we not in danger of succumbing to subjectivism, of wanting to "skip" over the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which has not yet been completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement—to the Socialist revolution?

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<sup>1</sup> Prince G. Lvov (1861-1925)—large landowner, member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Prime Minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government from March to July 1917.—Ed.

Many things are possible. It would be a profound mistake to forget the agrarian movement and the agrarian program. But it would be equally mistaken to forget *reality*, and reality reveals the *fact* that an *agreement*, or—to use a more exact, less legal, but more class-economic expression—*class collaboration* exists between the bourgeoisie and the peasantry.

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A Marxist who, in view of the possibility of such a stage in the future, were to forget his duties *at the present moment*, when the peasantry is *in agreement* with the bourgeoisie, would become a petty-bourgeois. For he would in practice be preaching to the proletariat *confidence* in the petty-bourgeoisie [“the petty-bourgeoisie, the peasantry, must separate from the bourgeoisie while the bourgeois-democratic revolution is still on”]. Because of the “possibility” of so pleasant and sweet a future, in which the peasantry would *not* form the tail of the bourgeoisie, in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries, the Chkheidzes, Tseretelis and Steklovs would *not* be an appendage of the bourgeois government—because of the “possibility” of so pleasant a future, he would be forgetting *the unpleasant present*, in which the peasantry still forms the tail of the bourgeoisie, and in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats have not yet ceased to be an appendage of the bourgeois government, His Majesty Lvov’s<sup>1</sup> Opposition.

This hypothetical person would resemble a meek Louis Blanc, or a saccharine Kautskyan, but not a revolutionary Marxist.

But are we not in danger of succumbing to subjectivism, of wanting to “skip” over the bourgeois-democratic revolution—which has not yet been completed and has not yet exhausted the peasant movement—to the Socialist revolution?

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<sup>1</sup> Prince G. Lvov (1861-1925)—large landowner, member of the Constitutional-Democratic Party, Prime Minister in the bourgeois Provisional Government from March to July 1917.—Ed.

anarchism denies *the necessity for a state and for a state power* in the period of *transition* from the rule of the bourgeoisie to the rule of the proletariat, whereas I, with a precision that precludes all possibility of misunderstanding, *insist* on the necessity for a state in this period, although, in accordance with Marx and the experience of the Paris Commune, not the usual bourgeois parliamentary state, but a state *without* a standing army, *without* a police opposed to the people, *without* an officialdom placed above the people.

When Mr. Plekhanov, in his newspaper *Yedinstvo*, cries at the top of his voice that this is anarchism, he is only giving one more proof of his rupture with Marxism. In reply to my challenge in the *Pravda* (No. 26) that he should tell what Marx and Engels taught on the subject of the state in 1871, 1872 and 1875, Mr. Plekhanov is, and will be, obliged to preserve silence on the essence of the question, and indulge instead in outcries after the manner of the enraged bourgeoisie.

Mr. Plekhanov, the ex-Marxist, has *absolutely* failed to understand the Marxist doctrine of the state. Incidentally, the germs of this lack of understanding are to be observed also in his German pamphlet on anarchism.

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It is often said and written that the core of Marx's theory is the class struggle; but this is not true. And from this error very often springs the opportunist distortion of Marxism, its falsification to make it acceptable to the bourgeoisie. For the doctrine of the class struggle was created *not* by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie *before* Marx, and generally speaking it is *acceptable* to the bourgeoisie. Those who recognize *only* the class struggle are not yet Marxists; they may be found to be still within the boundaries of bourgeois reasoning and bourgeois politics. To limit Marxism to the doctrine of the class struggle means curtailing Marxism, distorting it, reducing it to something which is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. Only he is a Marxist who *extends* the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is where the profound difference lies between a Marxist and an ordinary petty (and even big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested. And it is not surprising that when the history of Europe brought the working class face to face with this question in a *practical* way, not only all the opportunists and reformists, but all the Kautsky-ites (people who vacillate between reformism and Marxism) proved to be miserable philistines and petty-bourgeois democrats who *repudiated* the dictatorship of the proletariat. Kautsky's pamphlet, *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* published in August 1918, *i.e.*, long after the first edition of the present pamphlet, is an example of petty-bourgeois distortion of Marxism and base renunciation of it *in practice*, while hypocritically recognizing it *in words* (see my pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky*, Petrograd and Moscow, 1918).

Present-day opportunism in the person of its principal representative, the ex-Marxist, K. Kautsky, fits in completely with Marx's characterization of the *bourgeois* position quoted above, for this opportunism limits the field of recognition of the class struggle to the realm of bourgeois relationships. (Within this realm, within its framework, not a single educated liberal will refuse to recognize the class struggle "in principle"! ) Opportunism *does not carry* the recognition of class struggle to

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opinion between the two writers on the question of the state was very considerable.

Engels suggested to Bebel that all the chatter about the state be dropped; that the word "state" be eliminated from the program altogether and the word "community" substituted for it. Engels even declared that the Commune was really no longer a state in the proper sense of the word. Yet Marx spoke of the "future state in Communist society," *i.e.*, as though he recognized the need for a state even under Communism.

But such a view would be fundamentally wrong. A closer examination shows that Marx's and Engels' views on the state and its withering away were completely identical, and that Marx's expression quoted above refers merely to this *withering away* of the state.

Clearly there can be no question of defining the exact moment of the *future* "withering away"—the more so since it must obviously be a rather lengthy process. The apparent difference between Marx and Engels is due to the different subjects they dealt with, the different aims they were pursuing. Engels set out to show Bebel plainly, sharply and in broad outline the absurdity of the prevailing prejudices concerning the state, which were shared to no small degree by Lassalle. Marx only touched upon *this* question in passing, being interested in another subject, *viz.*, the *development* of Communist society.

The whole theory of Marx is an application of the theory of development—in its most consistent, complete, thought-out and replete form—to modern capitalism. Naturally, Marx was faced with the question of applying this theory both to the *forthcoming* collapse of capitalism and to the *future* development of *future* Communism.

On the basis of what *data* can the question of the future development of future Communism be raised?

On the basis of the fact that *it has its origin* in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of social force to which capitalism *has given birth*. There is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to conjure up a utopia, to make idle guesses about what cannot be known. Marx treats the question of Communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development, say,

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## 2. THE TRANSITION FROM CAPITALISM TO COMMUNISM

Marx continues:

"Between capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the *revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat*."

Marx bases this conclusion on an analysis of the role played by the proletariat in modern capitalist society, on the data concerning the development of this society, and on the irreconcilability of the antagonistic interests of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

Earlier the question was put in this way: in order to achieve its emancipation, the proletariat must overthrow the bourgeoisie, conquer political power and establish its revolutionary dictatorship.

Now the question is put somewhat differently: the transition from capitalist society—which is developing towards Communism—to a Communist society is impossible without a "political transition period," and the state in this period can only be the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

What, then, is the relation of this dictatorship to democracy?

We have seen that *The Communist Manifesto* simply places the two ideas side by side: "to raise the proletariat to the position of the ruling class" and "to win the battle of democracy." On the basis of all that has been said above, it is possible to determine more precisely how democracy changes in the transition from capitalism to Communism.

In capitalist society, under the conditions most favourable to its development, we have more or less complete democracy in the democratic republic. But this democracy is always restricted by the narrow framework of capitalist exploitation, and consequently always remains, in reality, a democracy for the minority, only for the possessing classes, only for the rich. Freedom in capitalist society always remains about the same as it was in the ancient Greek republics: freedom for the slave-owners. Owing to the conditions of capitalist exploitation the modern wage slaves are so crushed by want and poverty that

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decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class should represent and repress them in parliament!

But from this capitalist democracy—inevitably narrow, tacitly repelling the poor, and therefore hypocritical and false to the core—forward development does not proceed simply, directly and smoothly to “greater and greater democracy,” as the liberal professors and petty-bourgeois opportunists would have us believe. No, forward development, *i.e.*, towards Communism, proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat, and cannot do otherwise, for the *resistance* of the capitalist exploiters cannot be *broken* by anyone else or in any other way.

But the dictatorship of the proletariat, *i.e.*, the organization of the vanguard of the oppressed as the ruling class for the purpose of crushing the oppressors, cannot result merely in an expansion of democracy. *Simultaneously* with an immense expansion of democracy, which *for the first time* becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people, and not democracy for the rich, the dictatorship of the proletariat imposes a series of restrictions on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters, the capitalists. We must crush them in order to free humanity from wage slavery; their resistance must be broken by force; it is clear that where there is suppression, where there is coercion, there is no freedom and no democracy.

Engels expressed this splendidly in his letter to Bebel when he said, as the reader will remember, that “so long as the proletariat still *uses* the state, it does not use it in the interests of freedom but in order to hold down its adversaries, and as soon as it becomes possible to speak of freedom the state as such ceases to exist.”

Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force. *i.e.*, exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change democracy undergoes during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism.

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Furthermore, during the *transition* from capitalism to Communism suppression is *still* necessary; but it is now the suppression of the exploiting minority by the exploited majority. A special apparatus, a special machine for suppression, the "state," is *still* necessary, but this is now a transitory state; it is no longer a state in the proper sense; for the suppression of the minority of exploiters by the majority of the wage slaves of *yesterday* is comparatively so easy, simple and natural a task that it will entail far less bloodshed than the suppression of the risings of slaves, serfs or wage-labourers, and it will cost mankind far less. And it is compatible with the extension of democracy to such an overwhelming majority of the population that the need for a *special machine* of suppression will begin to disappear. The exploiters are naturally unable to suppress the people without a very complex machine for performing this task; but *the people* can suppress the exploiters even with a very simple "machine," almost without a "machine," without a special apparatus, by the simple *organization of the armed masses* (such as the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, we may remark, running ahead a little).

Finally, only Communism makes the state absolutely unnecessary, for there is *nobody* to be suppressed—"nobody" in the sense of *a class*, in the sense of a systematic struggle against a definite section of the population. We are not utopians, and we do not in the least deny the possibility and inevitability of excesses on the part of *individual persons*, or the need to suppress *such* excesses. But, in the first place, no special machine, no special apparatus of repression is needed for this; this will be done by the armed people itself, as simply and as readily as any crowd of civilized people, even in modern society, parts two people who are fighting, or interferes to prevent a woman from being assaulted. And, secondly, we know that the fundamental social cause of excesses, which consist of violating the rules of social intercourse, is the exploitation of the masses, their want and their poverty. With the removal of this chief cause, excesses will inevitably begin to "*wither away*." We do not know how quickly and in what order, but we know that

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society to the effect that he has done such and such an amount of work. And with this certificate he draws from the social stock of means of consumption a corresponding quantity of products. After deduction of the amount of labour which goes to the public fund, every worker, therefore, receives from society as much as he has given it.

"Equality" apparently reigns supreme.

But when Lassalle, having such a social order in view (usually called Socialism, but termed by Marx the first phase of Communism), speaks of this as "equitable distribution," and says that this is "the equal right" of "all members of society" to "equal proceeds of labour," he is mistaken, and Marx exposes his error.

"Equal right," says Marx, we indeed have here; but it is *still* a "bourgeois right," which, like every right, *presupposes inequality*. Every right is an application of an *equal* standard to *different* people who in fact are not alike, are not equal to one another; that is why "equal right" is really a violation of equality and an injustice. As a matter of fact, every man, having performed as much social labour as another, receives an equal share of the social product (after the above-mentioned deductions).

But people are not alike: one is strong, another is weak; one is married, another is not; one has more children, another has less, and so on. And the conclusion Marx draws is:

"... With an equal output and hence an equal share in the social consumption fund, one will in fact receive more than another, one will be richer than another, and so on. To avoid all these defects, right, instead of being equal, would have to be unequal..."

Hence, the first phase of Communism cannot yet produce justice and equality; differences, and unjust differences, in wealth will still exist, but the *exploitation* of man by man will have become impossible, because it will be impossible to seize the *means of production*, the factories, machines, land, etc., as private property. In smashing Lassalle's petty-bourgeois, confused phrases about "equality" and "justice" *in general*, Marx shows the *course of development* of Communist society, which at first is *compelled* to abolish *only* the "injustice" of the means

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is *already* realized; the other Socialist principle: "An equal amount of products for an equal amount of labour," is also *already* realized. But this is not yet Communism, and it does not yet abolish "bourgeois right," which gives to unequal individuals, in return for an unequal (actually unequal) amount of labour, an equal amount of products.

This is a "defect," says Marx, but it is unavoidable in the first phase of Communism; for if we are not to indulge in utopianism, we must not think that having overthrown capitalism people will at once learn to work for society *without any standard of right*; and indeed the abolition of capitalism *does not immediately* create the economic premises for *such a change*.

And there is as yet no other standard than that of "bourgeois right." To this extent, therefore, there is still need for a state, which, while safeguarding the public ownership of the means of production would safeguard equality of labour and equality in the distribution of products.

The state withers away in so far as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no *class* can be *suppressed*.

But the state has not yet completely withered away, since there still remains the safeguarding of "bourgeois right," which sanctifies actual inequality. For the complete withering away of the state complete Communism is necessary.

#### 4. THE HIGHER PHASE OF COMMUNIST SOCIETY

Marx continues:

"In a higher phase of Communist society, after the enslaving subordination of individuals under division of labour, and therewith also the antithesis between mental and physical labour, has vanished; after labour, from a mere means of life, has itself become the prime necessity of life; after the productive forces have also increased with the all-round development of the individual, and all the springs of co-operative wealth flow more abundantly—only then can the narrow horizon of bourgeois right be fully left behind and society inscribe on its banners: From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs!"

Only now can we appreciate to the full the correctness of Engels' remarks in which he mercilessly ridiculed the absurdity

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less pay than another—this narrow horizon will then be left behind. There will then be no need for society to regulate the quantity of products to be distributed to each; each will take freely “according to his needs.”

From the bourgeois point of view, it is easy to declare that such a social order is “a pure utopia” and to sneer at the Socialists for promising everyone the right to receive from society, without any control of the labour of the individual citizen, any quantity of truffles, automobiles, pianos, etc. Even now, most bourgeois “savants” confine themselves to sneering in this way, thereby displaying at once their ignorance and their mercenary defence of capitalism.

Ignorance—for it has never entered the head of any Socialist to “promise” that the higher phase of the development of Communism will arrive; but the great Socialists, in *foreseeing* its arrival, presuppose not the present productivity of labour *and not the present* ordinary run of people, who like the seminary students in Pomyalovsky’s stories,<sup>1</sup> are capable of damaging the stocks of social wealth “just for fun” and of demanding the impossible.

Until the “higher” phase of Communism arrives, the Socialists demand the *strictest* control by society *and by the state* of the measure of labour and the measure of consumption; but this control must *start* with the expropriation of the capitalists, with the establishment of workers’ control over the capitalists, and must be carried out not by a state of bureaucrats, but by a state of *armed workers*.

The mercenary defence of capitalism by the bourgeois ideologists (and their hangers-on, like Messrs. Tsereteli, Chernov and Co.) lies in their *substituting* controversies and discussions about the distant future for the essential and imperative questions of *present-day* policy, *viz.*, the expropriation of the capitalists, the conversion of *all* citizens into workers and employees of *one* huge “syndicate”—the whole state—and the complete subordination of the whole of the work of this syndi-

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be fully ripe economically and entirely free from the traditions and traces of capitalism. Hence the interesting phenomenon that Communism in its first phase retains "the narrow horizon of *bourgeois* right." Of course, bourgeois right in regard to the distribution of articles of *consumption* inevitably presupposes the existence of the *bourgeois state*, for right is nothing without an apparatus capable of *enforcing* the observance of the standards of right.

Consequently, not only bourgeois right, but even the bourgeois state for a certain time remains under Communism, without the bourgeoisie!

This may sound like a paradox or simply a dialectical puzzle, of which Marxism is often accused by people who do not take the slightest trouble to study its extraordinarily profound content.

But as a matter of fact, remnants of the old surviving in the new confront us in life at every step, both in nature and in society. And Marx did not arbitrarily insert a scrap of "bourgeois" right into Communism, but indicated what is economically and politically inevitable in a society emerging *from the womb* of capitalism.

Democracy is of great importance to the working class in its struggle for emancipation from the capitalists. But democracy is by no means a boundary that must not be overstepped; it is only one of the stages on the road from feudalism to capitalism, and from capitalism to Communism.

Democracy means equality. The great significance of the proletariat's struggle for equality and the significance of equality as a slogan will be clear if we correctly interpret it as meaning the abolition of *classes*. But democracy means only *formal* equality. And as soon as equality is obtained for all members of society *in relation to* the ownership of the means of production, that is, equality of labour and equality of wages, humanity will inevitably be confronted with the question of going beyond formal equality to real equality, *i.e.*, to applying the rule, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." By what stages, by what practical measures humanity will proceed to this higher aim—we do not and cannot know. But it is important to realize how infinitely

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Accounting and control—that is the *main* thing required for the “setting up” and correct functioning of the *first phase* of Communist society. All citizens are transformed into the salaried employees of the state, which consists of the armed workers. All citizens become employees and workers of a *single* national state “syndicate.” All that is required is that they should work equally—do their proper share of work—and get paid equally. The accounting and control necessary for this have been *simplified* by capitalism to an extreme and reduced to the extraordinarily simple operations—which any literate person can perform—of checking and recording, knowledge of the four rules of arithmetic, and issuing receipts.<sup>1</sup>

When the *majority* of the people begin independently and everywhere to keep such accounts and maintain such control over the capitalists (now converted into employees) and over the intellectual gentry who preserve their capitalist habits, this control will really become universal, general, national; and there will be no way of getting away from it, there will be “nowhere to go.”

The whole of society will have become a single office and a single factory, with equality of labour and equality of pay.

But this “factory” discipline, which the proletariat will extend to the whole of society after the defeat of the capitalists and the overthrow of the exploiters, is by no means our ideal, or our ultimate goal. It is but a necessary *step* for the purpose of thoroughly purging society of all the hideousness and foulness of capitalist exploitation, and for further progress.

From the moment all members of society, or even only the vast majority, have learned to administer the state *themselves*, have taken this business into their own hands, have “set up”

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For when *all* have learned to administer and actually do administer social production independently, independently keep accounts and exercise control over the idlers, the gentle-folk, the swindlers and similar "guardians of capitalist traditions," the escape from this national accounting and control will inevitably become so incredibly difficult, such a rare ex-

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state. Still less does it follow that the forms of our Socialist state must remain unchanged, that all the original functions of our state must be fully preserved in future. As a matter of fact, the forms of our state are changing and will continue to change in line with the development of our country and with the changes in the international situation.

"Lenin was absolutely right when he said:

"The forms of bourgeois states are extremely varied, but in essence they are all the same: in one way or another, in the final analysis, all these states are inevitably the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*. The transition from capitalism to Communism will certainly create a great variety and abundance of political forms, but their essence will inevitably be the same: *the dictatorship of the proletariat*." (*The State and Revolution*.)

"Since the October Revolution, our Socialist state has passed through two main phases in its development.

"The first phase was the period from the October Revolution to the elimination of the exploiting classes. The principal task in that period was to suppress the resistance of the overthrown classes, to organize the defence of the country against the attack of the interventionists, to restore industry and agriculture, and to prepare the conditions for the elimination of the capitalist elements. Accordingly, in this period our state performed two main functions. The first function was to suppress the overthrown classes inside the country. In this respect our state bore a superficial resemblance to previous states whose functions had also been to suppress recalcitrants, with the fundamental difference, however, that our state suppressed the exploiting minority in the interests of the labouring majority, while previous states had suppressed the exploited majority in the interests of the exploiting minority. The second function was to defend the country from foreign attack. In this respect it likewise bore a superficial resemblance to previous states, which also undertook the armed defence of their countries, with the fundamental difference, however, that our state defended from foreign attack the gains of the labouring majority, while previous states in such cases defended the wealth and privileges of the exploiting minority. Our state had yet a third function: this was the work of economic organization and cultural education performed by our state bodies with the purpose of developing the infant shoots of the new, Socialist economic system and re-educating the people in the spirit of Socialism. But this new function did not attain to any considerable development in that period.

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## MARXISM AND INSURRECTION

A LETTER TO THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE R.S.D.L.P.

One of the most vicious and probably most widespread distortions of Marxism practised by the prevailing "Socialist" parties consists in the opportunist lie that preparations for insurrection and generally the treatment of insurrection as an art are "Blanquism."

Bernstein, the leader of opportunism, has already earned himself a wretched notoriety by accusing Marxism of Blanquism, and when our present-day opportunists cry Blanquism they do not improve on or "enrich" the meagre "ideas" of Bernstein one jot.

Marxists are accused of Blanquism for treating insurrection as an art! Can there be a more flagrant perversion of the truth, when not a single Marxist will deny that it was Marx who expressed himself on this score in the most definite, precise and categorical manner, inasmuch as it was Marx who called insurrection precisely an *art*, saying that it must be treated as an art, that the first success must be won, and that one must proceed from success to success, never ceasing the *offensive* against the enemy, taking every advantage of his confusion, etc., etc.?

To be successful, insurrection must rely not upon conspiracy and not upon a party, but upon the advanced class. That is the first point. Insurrection must rely upon the rising revolutionary spirit of the people. That is the second point. Insurrection must rely upon the *crucial moment* in the history of the growing revolution, when the activity of the advanced ranks of the people is at its height, and when the *vacillations* in the ranks

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out to the Bolsheviks, and by the experience of the Kornilov affair.<sup>1</sup>

2) There was no nation-wide rising revolutionary spirit at that time. There is that now, after the Kornilov affair, as is proved by the situation in the provinces and by the seizure of power by the Soviets in many localities.

3) At that time there was no *vacillation* on any serious political scale among our enemies and among the irresolute petty bourgeoisie. Now the vacillation is enormous. Our main enemy, Allied and world imperialism (for world imperialism is being led by the "Allies"), *has begun to waver* between a war to a victorious finish and a separate peace directed against Russia. Our petty-bourgeois democrats, having clearly lost their majority among the people, have begun to vacillate enormously, and have rejected a bloc, *i.e.*, a coalition, with the Cadets.

4) Therefore, an insurrection on July 3-4 would have been a mistake: we could not have retained power either physically or politically. We could not have retained it physically in spite of the fact that at certain moments Petrograd was in our hands, because at that time our workers and soldiers would not have *fought and died* for the possession of Petrograd. There was not at that time that "savageness," nor that fierce hatred *both* of the Kerenskys *and* of the Tseretelis and Chernovs. Our people had not yet been tempered by the experience of the persecution of the Bolsheviks in which the Socialist-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks participated.

We could not have retained power politically on July 3-4 because *before the Kornilov affair* the army and the provinces might have, and would have, marched against Petrograd.

The picture is now entirely different.

We have the following of the majority of a *class*, the vanguard of the revolution, the vanguard of the people, which is capable of carrying the masses with it.

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the counter-revolutionary venture in August-September 1917, undertaken by General Kornilov to crush the revolution, abolish the Soviets and set up a military dictatorship. It was only due to the energetic measures of the Bolshevik Party, which headed the armed resistance to the counter-revolution, that the Kornilov revolt was crushed.—Ed.

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All the objective conditions for a successful insurrection exist. We have the advantage of a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can put an end to that most painful thing on earth, vacillation, which has worn the people out; a situation in which *only* our success in the insurrection can foil the game of a separate peace directed against the revolution by publicly proposing a fuller, juster and earlier peace to *the benefit* of the revolution.

Finally, our Party alone *can*, by a successful insurrection, save Petrograd; for if our proposal for peace is rejected, if we do not secure even an armistice, then *we* shall become "defencists," then we shall place ourselves *at the head of the war parties*, we shall be the "*war*" party *par excellence*, and we shall fight the war in a truly revolutionary manner. We shall take away all the bread and boots from the capitalists. We shall leave them only crusts, we shall dress them in bast shoes. We shall send all the bread and shoes to the front.

And we shall save Petrograd.

The resources, both material and spiritual, for a truly revolutionary war in Russia are still immense; the chances are a hundred to one that the Germans will grant us at least an armistice. And to secure an armistice now would in itself mean to win the *whole world*.

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Having recognized the absolute necessity of an insurrection of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow to save the revolution and to save Russia from being "separately" divided up among the imperialists of both coalitions, we must first adapt our political tactics at the Conference to the conditions of the growing insurrection, and, secondly, we must show that our acceptance of Marx's idea that insurrection must be treated as an art is not merely a verbal acceptance.

At the Conference we must immediately set about consolidating the Bolshevik fraction, without striving after numbers, and without fearing to leave the waverers in the camp of the waverers: they are more useful to the cause of the revolution *there* than in the camp of the resolute and devoted fighters.

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fraction on the factories and barracks, *we shall be able to decide the right moment to launch the insurrection.*

And in order to treat insurrection in a Marxist way, i.e., as an art, we must at the same time, without losing a single moment, organize a *staff* of the insurgent detachments; we must distribute our forces; we must move the reliable regiments to the most important points; we must surround the Alexandrinsky Theatre;<sup>1</sup> we must occupy the Peter and Paul fortress;<sup>2</sup> we must arrest the General Staff and the government, we must move against the cadets and the Savage Division<sup>3</sup> such detachments as will rather die than allow the enemy to approach the centre of the city; we must mobilize the armed workers and call upon them to engage in a last desperate fight; we must occupy the telegraph and telephone stations at once, quarter our staff of the insurrection at the central telephone station and connect it by telephone with all the factories, all the regiments, all the points of armed fighting, etc.

Of course, this is all by way of example, only to *illustrate* the fact that at the present moment it is impossible to remain loyal to Marxism, to remain loyal to the revolution, *without treating insurrection as an art.*

September 1917

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Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

1) Never *play* with insurrection, but when beginning it firmly realize that you must *go to the end*.

2) You must concentrate a *great superiority of forces* at the decisive point, at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organization, will destroy the insurgents.

3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive*. "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."

4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

5) You must strive for *daily* successes, even if small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain "*moral ascendancy*."

Marx summarized the lessons of all revolutions in respect to armed insurrection in the words of Danton, "the greatest master of revolutionary tactics yet known": "audacity, audacity, and once again audacity."

Applied to Russia and to October 1917, this means: a simultaneous offensive on Petrograd, as sudden and as rapid as possible, which must without fail be carried out from within and from without, from the working-class quarters and from Finland, from Reval and from Kronstadt, an offensive of the *whole* fleet, the concentration of a *gigantic superiority* of forces over the 15,000 or 20,000 (perhaps more) of our "bourgeois guard" (the cadets), our "Vendean troops"<sup>1</sup> (a part of the Cossacks), etc.

Our *three* main forces—the navy, the workers, and the army units—must be so combined as to occupy without fail and to hold *at the cost of any sacrifice*: a) the telephone exchange; b) the telegraph office; c) the railway stations; d) above all, the bridges.

The *most determined* elements (our "storm troops" and *young workers*, as well as the best of the sailors) must be

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<sup>1</sup> "Vendean troops"—synonymous of counter-revolutionary troops. The department of Vendée, in central-west France, was one of the hotbeds of the counter-revolutionary uprising of the peasantry during the bourgeois revolution in France at the end of the eighteenth century.—Ed.

Of the principal rules of this art, Marx noted the following:

1) Never *play* with insurrection, but when beginning it firmly realize that you must *go to the end*.

2) You must concentrate a *great superiority of forces* at the decisive point, at the decisive moment, otherwise the enemy, who has the advantage of better preparation and organization, will destroy the insurgents.

3) Once the insurrection has begun, you must act with the greatest *determination*, and by all means, without fail, take the *offensive*. "The defensive is the death of every armed rising."

4) You must try to take the enemy by surprise and seize the moment when his forces are scattered.

5) You must strive for *daily* successes, even if small (one might say hourly, if it is the case of one town), and at all costs retain "*moral ascendancy*."

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## PROPHETIC WORDS

Nobody, thank God, believes in miracles nowadays. Miraculous prophecy is a fairy tale. But scientific prophecy is a fact. And in these days, when we very often meet with shameful despondency and even despair round about us, it is useful to recall one scientific prophecy which has come true.

Frederick Engels had occasion in 1887 to write of the coming world war in a preface to a pamphlet by Sigismund Borkheim, *In Memory of the German Arch-Patriots of 1806-1807* (*Zur Erinnerung für die deutschen Mordspatrioten 1806-1807*). (This pamphlet is No. XXIV of the *Social-Democratic Library* published in Göttingen-Zürich in 1888.)

This is how Frederick Engels spoke over thirty years ago of the future world war:

"... No war is any longer possible for Prussia-Germany except a world war and a world war indeed of an extension and violence hitherto undreamt of. Eight to ten millions of soldiers will mutually massacre one another and in doing so devour the whole of Europe until they have stripped it barer than any swarm of locusts has ever done. The devastations of the Thirty Years' War compressed into three or four years, and spread over the whole Continent; famine, pestilence, general demoralization both of the armies and of the mass of the people produced by acute distress; hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional state wisdom to such an extent that crowns will roll by dozens on the pavement and there will be nobody to pick them up; absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end and who will come out of the struggle as victor; only one result absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class. This is the prospect when the system of mutual outbidding in armaments, driven to extremities, at last bears its inevitable fruits. This, my lords, princes and statesmen, is where in your wisdom you have

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"... Crowns will roll by dozens...." Several crowns have already fallen. And one of them is worth a dozen others—the crown of the autocrat of all the Russias, Nicholas Romanov.

"... Absolute impossibility of foreseeing how it will all end...." After four years of war this absolute impossibility has, if one may say so, become even more absolute.

"... Hopeless confusion of our artificial machinery in trade, industry and credit...." At the end of the fourth year of war this has been fully borne out in the case of one of the biggest and most backward states drawn into the war by the capitalists—Russia. But do not the growing starvation in Germany and Austria, the shortage of clothing and raw material and the using up of the means of production show that a similar state of affairs is very rapidly overtaking other countries as well?

Engels depicts the consequences brought about only by "foreign" war; he does not deal with internal, *i.e.*, civil war, without which not a single one of the great revolutions of history has taken place, and without which not a single serious Marxist has conceived the transition from capitalism to Socialism. And while a foreign war may drag on for a certain time without causing "hopeless confusion" in the "artificial machinery" of capitalism, it is obvious that a civil war without such a consequence is quite inconceivable.

What stupidity, what spinelessness—not to say mercenary service to the bourgeoisie—is displayed by those who, like our *Novaya Zhizn*-ites, Mensheviks, Right Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc., while continuing to call themselves "Socialists," maliciously point to the manifestation of this "hopeless confusion" and lay the blame for everything on the revolutionary proletariat, the Soviet power, the "utopia" of the transition to Socialism. "Confusion," or *razrukha*,<sup>1</sup> to use the excellent Russian expression, has been brought about by the war. There can be no severe war without disruption. There can be no civil war—the inevitable condition and concomitant of Socialist revolution—without disruption. To renounce revolution and Socialism "on account" of disruption, only means to display one's lack of principle and in practice to desert to the bourgeoisie.

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*joie de vivre* (*The Joy of Life*) for instance, or in Veresayev's *Notes of a Doctor*. Human childbirth is an act which transforms the woman into an almost lifeless, bloodstained body, tortured, tormented and driven frantic by pain. But can the "type" that sees *only* this in love and its sequel, the transformation of the woman into a mother, be regarded as a human being? Who would renounce love and procreation for *this* reason?

Travail may be light or severe. Marx and Engels, the founders of scientific Socialism, always said that the transition from capitalism to Socialism would be inevitably accompanied by *prolonged birth pangs*. And analysing the consequences of a world war, Engels outlines in a simple and clear manner the indisputable and obvious fact that a revolution that follows on and is connected with a war (and still more—let us add for our part—a revolution which breaks out during a war and which is obliged to grow and maintain itself in the midst of a world war), is a *particularly severe* case of childbirth.

Clearly realizing this, Engels speaks with great caution of Socialism being given birth to by a capitalist society which is perishing in a world war. "Only one result [of a world war]," he says, "is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the *establishment* of the conditions for the ultimate victory of the working class."

This thought is expressed even more clearly at the end of the preface we are examining:

"... At the end of the tragedy you [the capitalists and landlords, the kings and statesmen of the bourgeoisie] will be ruined and the victory of the proletariat will either be already achieved or at any rate inevitable."

Severe travail greatly increases the danger of grave illness or of a fatal issue. But while individuals may die in the act of childbirth, the new society to which the old system gives birth cannot die; all that may happen is that the birth may be more painful, more prolonged, and growth and development slower.

The war has not yet ended. General exhaustion has already set in. As regards the two *direct* results of war predicted by Engels conditionally (either the victory of the working class already achieved, or the establishment of conditions which

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(Excerpt)

### HOW KAUTSKY TRANSFORMED MARX INTO A COMMON OR GARDEN LIBERAL

The fundamental question that Kautsky touches upon in his pamphlet is the question of the root content of proletarian revolution, namely, the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is a question that is of the greatest importance for all countries, especially for the advanced ones, especially for the belligerent countries, and especially at the present time. One may say without fear of exaggeration that this is the most important problem of the entire proletarian class struggle. Hence it is necessary to deal with it with particular attention.

Kautsky formulates the question as follows: "The antithesis between the two Socialist trends" (*i.e.*, the Bolsheviks and the non-Bolsheviks) is "the antithesis between two radically different methods: the democratic and the dictatorial" (p. 3).

Let us point out, in passing, that by calling the non-Bolsheviks in Russia, *i.e.*, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, Socialists, Kautsky was guided by their appellation, that is, by a word, and not by the *actual place* they occupy in the struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. What an excellent interpretation and application of Marxism! But of this more anon.

At present we must deal with the main point, *viz.*, with Kautsky's great discovery of the "fundamental antithesis" between the "democratic and dictatorial methods." That is the

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same thing is even repeated in the form that they (the Bolsheviks) "opportunistly recalled the little word" (that is literally what he says—*des Wörtchens*!!) "about the dictatorship of the proletariat which Marx once used in 1875 in a letter."

Here is Marx's "little word":

"Between capitalist and Communist society lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. There corresponds to this also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."<sup>1</sup>

First of all, to call this celebrated argument of Marx's, which sums up the whole of his revolutionary teaching, "a single word" and even a "little word," is an insult to and complete renunciation of Marxism. It must not be forgotten that Kautsky knows Marx almost by heart, and, judging by all he has written, he has in his desk, or in his head, a number of pigeon-holes in which all that was ever written by Marx is carefully filed so as to be ready at hand for quotation. Kautsky *cannot but know* that both Marx and Engels, in their letters as well as in their published works, *repeatedly* spoke about the dictatorship of the proletariat, especially both before and after the Paris Commune. Kautsky cannot but know that the formula "dictatorship of the proletariat" is but a more historically concrete and more scientifically exact formulation of the proletariat's task of "smashing" the bourgeois state machine, about which Marx and Engels, in summing up the experience of the Revolution of 1848, and, still more so, of 1871, spoke *for forty years*, between 1852 and 1891.

How is this monstrous distortion of Marxism by that Marxist bookworm Kautsky, to be explained? As far as the philosophical roots of this phenomenon are concerned, it amounts to the substitution of eclecticism and sophistry for dialectics. Kautsky is a past master in this sort of substitution. Regarded from the standpoint of practical politics, it amounts to subserviency to the opportunists, that is, in the long run, to the bourgeoisie.

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Secondly, it is obviously wrong. A liberal naturally speaks of "democracy" in general; but a Marxist will never forget to ask: "for what class?" Everyone knows, for instance (and Kautsky the "historian" knows it too), that rebellions, or even strong ferment, among the slaves in antiquity at once revealed the fact that the state of antiquity was essentially a *dictatorship of the slaveowners*. Did this dictatorship abolish democracy among, and for, the slaveowners? Everybody knows that it did not.

Kautsky the "Marxist" said this monstrously absurd and untrue thing because he "*forgot*" the class struggle. . . .

In order to transform Kautsky's liberal and lying assertion into a Marxian and true one, one must say: dictatorship does not necessarily mean the abolition of democracy for the class that exercises the dictatorship over the other classes; but it certainly does mean the abolition (or very material restriction, which is also a form of abolition) of democracy for the class over which, or against which, the dictatorship is exercised.

But, however true this assertion may be, it does not give a definition of dictatorship.

Let us examine Kautsky's next sentence:

"But, of course, taken literally, this word also means the undivided rule of a single individual unrestricted by any laws."

Like a blind puppy casually sniffing first in one direction and then in another, Kautsky accidentally stumbled upon *one* true idea (namely, that dictatorship is rule unrestricted by any laws), *nevertheless*, he *failed* to give a definition of dictatorship, and, moreover, he gave vent to an obvious historical falsehood, *viz.*, that dictatorship means the rule of a single person. This is even grammatically incorrect, since dictatorship may also be exercised by a handful of persons, or by an oligarchy, or by a class, etc.

Kautsky then goes on to point out the difference between dictatorship and despotism, but, although what he says is obviously incorrect, we shall not dwell upon it, as it is wholly irrelevant to the question that interests us. Everyone knows Kautsky's propensity to turn from the twentieth century to the eighteenth, and from the eighteenth century to classical antiq-

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One must, if you please, distinguish between a "condition" and a "form of government"! A wonderfully profound distinction; it is like drawing a distinction between the stupid "condition" of a man who reasons foolishly and the "form" of his stupidity!

Kautsky *finds it necessary* to interpret dictatorship as a "condition of rulership" (this is the literal expression he uses on the very next page, p. 21), because then *revolutionary violence, and violent revolution, disappear*. The "condition of rulership" is a condition in which any majority finds itself under . . . "democracy." Thanks to such a fraudulent trick, *revolution* happily *disappears*.

But the trick is too crude and will not save Kautsky. One cannot do away with the fact that dictatorship presupposes and implies a "condition," one so disagreeable to all renegades, of *revolutionary violence* of one class against another. The absurdity of drawing a distinction between a "condition" and a "form of government" becomes patent. To speak of forms of government in this connection is trebly stupid, for every school-boy knows that monarchy and republic are two different forms of government. It must be explained to Mr. Kautsky that *both* these forms of government, like all transitional "forms of government" under capitalism, are but so many varieties of the *bourgeois state*, that is, of the *dictatorship of the bourgeoisie*.

Lastly, to speak of forms of government is not only a stupid, but also a very crude falsification of Marx, who was very clearly speaking here of this or that form or type of *state*, and not of forms of government.

The proletarian revolution is impossible without the forcible destruction of the bourgeois state machine and the substitution for it of a *new one* which, in the words of Engels, is "no longer a state in the proper sense of the word."

But Kautsky finds it necessary to gloss this over and to lie—his renegade position demands it.

See to what miserable evasions he resorts.

First evasion: "That Marx did not have in mind a form of government is proved by the fact that he was of the opinion that in England and America a peaceful revolution was possible, *i.e.*, by democratic means."

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these evasions, sophistries and fraudulent falsifications only in order to *dissociate* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the *liberal* labour policy, *i.e.*, to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is where the trouble lies.

Kautsky the "historian" so shamelessly falsifies history that he forgets the fundamental fact that pre-monopoly capitalism—which reached its zenith actually in the 1870's—was by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits (which were most typical in England and America) distinguished by a, relatively speaking, maximum attachment for peace and freedom. Imperialism, on the other hand, *i.e.*, monopoly capitalism, which finally matured only in the twentieth century, is, by virtue of its fundamental *economic* traits, distinguished by a minimum attachment for peace and freedom, and by a maximum and universal development of militarism. To "fail to notice" this in discussing the extent to which a peaceful or violent revolution is typical or probable is to stoop to the position of a common or garden lackey of the bourgeoisie.

Second evasion: The Paris Commune was a dictatorship of the proletariat, but it was elected by *universal* suffrage (the bourgeoisie not being deprived of the franchise), *i.e.*, "*democratically.*" And Kautsky says elatedly: "...The dictatorship of the proletariat, for him [Marx] is a condition which necessarily follows from pure democracy, if the proletariat represents the majority" (*bei überwiegendem Proletariat*, p. 21).

This Kautsky's argument is so amusing that one truly suffers from a veritable *embarras de richesses* (an embarrassment due to the wealth of replies that can be made to it). Firstly, it is well known that the flower, the General Staff, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie had fled from Paris to Versailles. In Versailles there was the "Socialist" Louis Blanc—which, by the way, proves the falsity of Kautsky's assertion that "all trends" of Socialism took part in the Paris Commune. Is it not ridiculous to represent the division of the inhabitants of Paris into two belligerent camps, in one of which the entire militant and politically active section of the bourgeoisie was concentrated, as "pure democracy," with "universal suffrage"?

these evasions, sophistries and fraudulent falsifications only in order to *dissociate* himself from *violent* revolution, and to conceal his renunciation of it, his desertion to the *liberal* labour policy, *i.e.*, to the side of the bourgeoisie. That is where the trouble lies.

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this was the *only* amendment they introduced in 1872 in the (in part) "obsolete" program<sup>1</sup> of the *Communist Manifesto*. Marx and Engels showed that the Paris Commune had abolished the army and the bureaucracy, had abolished *parliamentarism*, had destroyed "that parasitic excrescence, the state," etc.; but the sage Kautsky, donning his nightcap, repeats the fairy tale about "pure democracy," which has been told a thousand times by liberal professors.

Not without reason did Rosa Luxemburg declare, on August 4, 1914, that German Social-Democracy was now a *stinking corpse*.

Third evasion: "When we speak of the dictatorship as a form of government we cannot speak of the dictatorship of a class, since a class, as we have already pointed out, can only rule but not govern..." It is "organizations" or "parties" that govern!

That is a muddle, a sheer muddle, Mr. "Muddle Counsellor." Dictatorship is not a "form of government"; that is ridiculous nonsense. And Marx does not speak of the form of government, but of the form or type of *state*. That is something altogether different. It is altogether wrong, also, to say that a *class* cannot govern; such an absurdity could only have been uttered by a "parliamentary cretin," who sees nothing but bourgeois parliaments and notices nothing but "ruling parties." Any European country will provide Kautsky with examples of government by a ruling *class*, for instance by the landlords in the Middle Ages, in spite of their insufficient organization.

To sum up: Kautsky has in a most-unparalleled manner distorted the concept dictatorship of the proletariat, and has transformed Marx into a common or garden liberal; that is, he himself has sunk to the level of a liberal who utters banal phrases

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<sup>1</sup> Lenin refers here to the following passage in the preface to the German edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of 1872: "...in view of the practical experience gained, first in the February Revolution, and then, still more, in the Paris Commune, where the proletariat for the first time held political power for two whole months, this program has in some details become antiquated. One thing especially was proved by the Commune, *viz.*, that the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." (Cf., Karl Marx, *Selected Works*, Eng. ed., Moscow 1946, Vol. I, p. 98.) —Ed.

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## THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL AND ITS PLACE IN HISTORY

The imperialists of the "Entente" countries are blockading Russia, are striving to cut off the Soviet Republic as a hotbed of infection from the capitalist world. These people, who boast about the "democracy" of their institutions, are so blinded by their hatred for the Soviet Republic that they fail to observe that they are making themselves ridiculous. Just think: the advanced, most civilized and "democratic" countries, armed to the teeth, enjoying unchallenged military sway over the whole world, are mortally afraid of the *ideological* infection coming from a ruined, starving, backward, and, as they assert even semi-savage country!

This contradiction alone is opening the eyes of the masses of the toilers in all countries and helps to expose the hypocrisy of the imperialists Clemenceau, Lloyd George, Wilson and their governments.

But it is not only the blindness of the capitalists in their hatred for the Soviets that is helping us, but also their mutual quarrels which induce them to put spokes in each other's wheel. They have entered into a veritable conspiracy of silence, for the thing they fear most of all is the spread of true information about the Soviet Republic in general, and its official documents in particular. However, the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, *Le Temps*, has published a report of the foundation in Moscow of the Third, Communist International.

For this we express to the principal organ of the French bourgeoisie, to this leader of French chauvinism and imperialism, our most profound gratitude. We are prepared to send

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The First International laid the foundation of the proletarian, international struggle for Socialism.

The Second International marked the epoch in which the soil was prepared for a broad, mass, widespread movement in a number of countries.

The Third International gathered the fruits of the work of the Second International, purged it of its opportunist, social-chauvinist, bourgeois and petty-bourgeois dross, and *has begun to effect* the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The international alliance of the parties which are leading the most revolutionary movement in the world, the movement of the proletariat for the overthrow of the yoke of capital, now has a basis of unprecedented firmness: several *Soviet republics*, which on an international scale are putting into effect the dictatorship of the proletariat, its victory over capitalism.

The world-historical significance of the Third, Communist International lies in that it has begun to put into practice Marx’s greatest slogan, the slogan which sums up the century-old development of Socialism and the working-class movement, the slogan which is expressed by the term: dictatorship of the proletariat.

This prophecy of genius, this theory of genius, is becoming a reality.

This Latin phrase has now been translated into the languages of all the peoples of contemporary Europe—more than that, into all the languages of the world.

A new epoch in world history has begun.

Mankind is throwing off the last form of slavery: capitalist, or wage slavery.

Emancipating itself from slavery, mankind is for the first time passing to real liberty.

How is it that the first country to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, to organize a Soviet Republic, was one of the most backward of European countries? We shall not be

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England served as an example of a country in which, as Engels expressed it, the bourgeoisie, side by side with a bourgeois aristocracy, created the most bourgeois upper stratum of the proletariat. For several decades the advanced capitalist country proved to be backward in regard to the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat. France, as it were, exhausted the strength of the proletariat in two heroic uprisings of the working class against the bourgeoisie, in 1848 and in 1871, which were of unusually great world-historical significance. Then hegemony in the International of the working-class movement passed to Germany, in the seventies of the nineteenth century, when Germany was economically behind England and France. And when Germany ultimately surpassed these two countries economically, *i. e.*, in the second decade of the twentieth century, a handful of arch scoundrels, the filthiest blackguards, who had sold themselves to the capitalists—from Scheidemann and Noske to David and Legien—the most revolting executioners from the ranks of the workers in the service of the monarchy and of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, were found to be at the head of the Marxist workers' party of Germany, which had been a model for the whole world.

World history is undeviatingly marching toward the dictatorship of the proletariat, but it is far from marching toward it by smooth, simple and straight paths.

When Karl Kautsky was still a Marxist and not the renegade of Marxism that he became when he began to champion unity with the Scheidemanns and bourgeois democracy in opposition to Soviet or proletarian democracy, he, in the very beginning of the twentieth century, wrote an article entitled "The Slavs and Revolution." In this article he enunciated the historical conditions that would make possible the transition of hegemony in the international revolutionary movement to the Slavs.

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This list is incomplete of course; but for the time being it will suffice.

Soviet or proletarian democracy was born in Russia. The second step of world-historical importance was taken after the Paris Commune. The proletarian-peasant Soviet Republic proved to be the first stable Socialist republic in the world. As *a new type of state* it cannot die now. It no longer stands alone.

For the purpose of continuing the work of building Socialism, for the purpose of completing the work of construction, a very great deal is still required. The Soviet republics of the more cultured countries, in which the proletariat has greater weight and influence, have every chance of overtaking Russia as soon as they take the path of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The bankrupt Second International is now dying and decomposing alive. Actually, it is playing the role of lackey to the international bourgeoisie. It is a really yellow International. Its most prominent ideological leaders, like Kautsky, laud *bourgeois* democracy and call it "democracy" in general, or—what is still more stupid and still more crude—"pure democracy."

Bourgeois democracy is obsolete, and so also is the Second International which performed historically necessary and useful work when the problem of training the masses of the workers within the framework of this bourgeois democracy was on the order of the day.

The most democratic bourgeois republic was never, nor could ever be anything else than a machine with which capital suppressed the toilers, an instrument of the political rule of capital, of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. The democratic bourgeois republic promised the rule of the majority, it proclaimed the rule of the majority, but it could never put this into effect as long as the private ownership of the land and other means of production existed.

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To reconcile, to unite the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat! How simple! What a brilliantly philistine ideal!

The only pity is that this has been tried already in Russia, under Kerensky, by the united Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, these petty-bourgeois democrats who imagine that they are Socialists.

Those who have read Marx and have failed to understand that in capitalist society, at every acute moment, at every serious conflict of classes, only the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie or the dictatorship of the proletariat is possible, have understood nothing about the economic or the political doctrines of Marx.

But the brilliantly philistine idea of Hilferding, Kautsky and Co. of peacefully combining the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat must be dealt with separately if the economic and political absurdities heaped up in this very remarkable and comical manifesto of February 11 are to be plumbed to the depths. But this will have to be put off for another article.

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proletarian democracy, from bourgeois to proletarian dictatorship. They confused certain peculiarities of Russian Soviet power, of Russian history and its development with Soviet power as an international phenomenon.

The Hungarian proletarian revolution is helping even the blind to see. The form of transition to the dictatorship of the proletariat in Hungary is altogether different from that in Russia: the voluntary resignation of the bourgeois government, and the instantaneous restoration of the unity of the working class, the unity of Socialism on a *Communist program*. This makes the essence of Soviet rule all the clearer: no rule supported by the working people, headed by the proletariat, is now possible anywhere in the world except Soviet rule, except the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This dictatorship of the proletariat implies the ruthlessly severe, swift and resolute use of force to crush the resistance of the exploiters, of the capitalists, landlords and their underlings. He who does not understand that is not a revolutionary and must be removed from the post of leader or adviser of the proletariat.

But the essence of the proletarian dictatorship does not lie in force alone, or even mainly in force. Its quintessence is the organization and discipline of the advanced detachment of the working people, of their vanguard, their sole leader, the proletariat, whose object is to build Socialism, to abolish the division of society into classes, to make all members of society working people, to remove the basis for any kind of exploitation of man by man. This object cannot be achieved at one stroke. It requires a fairly long period of transition from capitalism to Socialism, because the reorganization of production is a difficult matter, because radical changes in all spheres of life need time, and because the enormous force of habit of petty-bourgeois and bourgeois dealings can be overcome only by a long and stubborn struggle. That is why Marx spoke of a long period of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the period of transition from capitalism to Socialism.

Throughout the whole of this transition period resistance to the revolution will be offered both by the capitalists, as well as by their numerous myrmidons among the bourgeois intel-

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the comradely discipline of the working people, their firm tie with the proletariat, their union around the proletariat, that new discipline, that new basis of social ties which replaces the feudal discipline of the Middle Ages and the discipline of starvation, the discipline of the "free" wage slave under capitalism.

In order to abolish classes a period of the dictatorship of one class is needed, the dictatorship, namely, of that one of the oppressed classes, which is capable not only of overthrowing the exploiters, not only of ruthlessly crushing their resistance, but also of breaking intellectually with the entire bourgeois-democratic ideology, with all the petty-bourgeois phrasemongering about liberty and equality in general (in reality, this phrasemongering implies, as Marx pointed out long ago, the "liberty and equality" of the *commodity owners*, the "liberty and equality" of the *capitalist and the worker*).

More, only that one of the oppressed classes is capable of abolishing classes by its dictatorship which has been schooled, united, trained and steeled by decades of the strike and political struggle against capital—only that class which has imbibed all the urban, industrial, big-capitalistic culture has the determination and ability to protect it, preserve it and further develop all its achievements, and make them available to all the people, to all the working folk—only that class which is able to stand all the hardships, trials, privations and great sacrifices which history inevitably imposes upon those who break with the past and boldly force a road for themselves to a new future—only that class whose finest members are filled with hatred and contempt for everything which is petty-bourgeois and philistine, for those qualities which flourish so profusely among the petty bourgeoisie, the minor employees and the "intelligentsia"—only that class which has been through the "hardening school of labour" and is able to inspire respect for its industriousness in every working individual and every honest man.

Comrades, Hungarian workers, you have set the world a better example than even Soviet Russia by having been able to unite at once all Socialists on the platform of a genuine proletarian dictatorship. You are now faced with the most noble and difficult task of holding your own in a rigorous war against

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## A GREAT BEGINNING

THE HEROISM OF THE WORKERS IN THE REAR.  
ON "COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

*(Excerpt)*

I have given the information about the Communist subbotniks in the fullest and most detailed manner because in this we undoubtedly see one of the most important aspects of Communist construction, to which our press pays insufficient attention, and which all of us have as yet failed to appreciate properly.

Less political fireworks and more attention to the simplest but vital facts of Communist construction, taken from and tested by life—this is the slogan which all of us, our writers, agitators, propagandists, organizers, etc., should repeat unceasingly.

It was natural and inevitable in the first period after the proletarian revolution that we should be engaged more on the main and fundamental task of overcoming the resistance of the bourgeoisie, of vanquishing the exploiters, of crushing their conspiracies (like the "slaveowners' conspiracy" to surrender Petrograd, in which all, from the Black-Hundreds and Constitutional-Democrats to the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, were involved). But simultaneously with this task, another task comes to the front with equal inevitability and more imperatively as time passes, *viz.*, the more material task of positive, Communist construction, the creation of new economic relations, of a new society.

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## A GREAT BEGINNING

THE HEROISM OF THE WORKERS IN THE REAR.  
ON "COMMUNIST SUBBOTNIKS"

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of creating the new, Socialist social system, in the whole struggle for the complete abolition of classes. (We will observe in parenthesis that the only scientific difference between Socialism and Communism is that the first word implies the first stage of the new society that is arising out of capitalism; the second implies the higher, the next stage.)

The mistake the "Berne,"<sup>1</sup> yellow International commits is that its leaders accept the class struggle and the leading role of the proletariat only in words and are afraid to think it out to its logical conclusion, they are afraid of the very conclusion which particularly terrifies the bourgeoisie, and which is absolutely unacceptable to it. They are afraid to admit that the dictatorship of the proletariat is *also* a period of the class struggle, which is inevitable as long as classes exist, and which changes in form, being particularly fierce and particularly peculiar in the first period after the overthrow of capital. The proletariat does not cease the class struggle after it has captured political power, but continues it until classes are abolished—of course, under other circumstances, in another form and by other means.

What does the "abolition of classes" mean? All those who call themselves Socialists recognize this as the ultimate goal of Socialism, but by no means all ponder over its significance. Classes are large groups of people which differ from each other by the place they occupy in a historically definite system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in laws) to the means of production, by their role in the social organization of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions and method of acquiring the share of social wealth that they obtain. Classes are groups of people one of which may appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in the definite system of social economy.

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<sup>1</sup> The "Berne" yellow International—synonymous of the Second International which split up into separate social-chauvinistic parties at the outbreak of the first World War (1914-18) and ceased to exist as an international organization. The first conference, at which the Second International was officially restored after the close of the war, was held in February 1919 in Berne, Switzerland.—Ed.

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has captured political power, namely, the proletariat, and the whole of the non-proletarian and also semi-proletarian mass of the toiling population—relations which are not established in fantastically-harmonious “ideal” conditions, but in the real conditions of the furious and many-sided resistance of the bourgeoisie.

The overwhelming majority of the population—and certainly of the toiling population—of any capitalist country, including Russia, has a thousand times experienced on its own back and on that of its kith and kin the yoke of capitalism, the robbery and every sort of tyranny of capitalism. The imperialist war, *i.e.*, the slaughter of ten million people in order to decide whether British or German capital is to attain supremacy in plundering the whole world, intensified, expanded and deepened this experience to an unusual degree and compelled the people to realize it. Hence the inevitable sympathy for the proletariat displayed by the overwhelming majority of the population, particularly by the masses of the toilers; for with heroic audacity, with revolutionary ruthlessness, the proletariat overthrows the yoke of capital, overthrows the exploiters, suppresses their resistance and sheds its blood to lay the road to the creation of the new society in which there will be no room for exploiters.

Great and inevitable as may be the petty-bourgeois waverings and vacillations of the non-proletarian and semi-proletarian masses of the toiling population to the side of bourgeois “order,” under the “wing” of the bourgeoisie, they cannot but recognize the moral and political authority of the proletariat, which not only overthrows the exploiters and suppresses their resistance, but also builds new, higher, social connections, social discipline, the discipline of class-conscious and united workers, who know no yoke, who know no authority except that of their own unity, of their own more class-conscious, bold, compact, revolutionary and steadfast vanguard.

In order to achieve victory, in order to create and consolidate Socialism, the proletariat must fulfill a twofold or dual task: first, by its devoted heroism in the revolutionary struggle against capital, to win over the whole mass of the toilers and

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or the Prussian, in creating a national, German, capitalist state. The formation of a single trade union was a tiny step towards the world victory of the proletariat over the bourgeoisie. Similarly, we can say that the first Communist subbotnik organized in Moscow on May 10, 1919, by the railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway was of greater historical significance than any of the victories of Hindenburg, or of Foch and the British, in the imperialist war of 1914-18. The victory of the imperialists is the slaughter of millions of workers for the sake of the profits of the Anglo-American and French billionaires; it is the brutality of doomed, overfed and decaying capitalism. The Communist subbotnik organized by the railway workers of the Moscow-Kazan Railway is one of the cells of the new Socialist society which brings to all the peoples of the earth emancipation from the yoke of capitalism and from wars.

Messieurs the bourgeoisie and their hangers-on, including the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, who are accustomed to regard themselves as the representatives of "public opinion," of course, jeer at the hopes of the Communists, call these hopes "a baobab tree in a mignonette flowerpot," sneer at the insignificant number of subbotniks held compared with the vast number of cases of thieving, idleness, decline of productivity, spoiling of raw materials, spoiling of finished goods, etc. In reply to these gentlemen we say: Had the bourgeois intelligentsia brought their knowledge to the assistance of the toilers instead of giving it to the Russian and foreign capitalists in order to restore their power, the revolution would have proceeded more rapidly and more peacefully. But this is utopia, for the question is decided by the struggle between classes, and the majority of the intellectuals are drawn towards the bourgeoisie. The proletariat is achieving victory, not with the assistance of the intelligentsia, but in spite of its opposition (at least in the majority of cases); it is removing the incorrigible bourgeois intellectuals, transforming, re-educating and subordinating the waverers, and gradually winning a larger and larger section over to its side. Gloating over the difficulties and setbacks of the revolution, sowing panic and preaching the return to the past—these are the weapons and the methods of class struggle

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new methods, means and weapons of struggle in order to discover the most suitable of them.

The "Communist subbotniks" are so important because they were initiated by workers who do not in the least enjoy exceptionally good conditions, by workers of various trades, and some with no trade at all, unskilled labourers, who are living under *ordinary, i.e., very hard*, conditions. We all know very well the main cause of the decline in the productivity of labour that is observed, not only in Russia, but all over the world: it is ruin and impoverishment, discontent and weariness caused by the imperialist war, sickness and starvation. The latter is first in importance. Starvation—that is the cause. And in order to abolish starvation, the productivity of labour must be raised in agriculture, in transport and in industry. Thus we get a sort of vicious circle: in order to raise the productivity of labour we must save ourselves from starvation, and in order to save ourselves from starvation we must raise the productivity of labour.

It is well known that such contradictions are solved in practice by breaking the vicious circle, by bringing about a change in the mood of the masses, by the heroic initiative of individual groups which, on the background of such a change in the mood of the masses, often plays a decisive role. The unskilled labourers and railway workers of Moscow (of course, we have in mind the majority of them, and not a handful of profiteers, officials and other Whiteguards) are working people who are living in desperately hard conditions. They are constantly underfed, and now, before the new harvest is gathered, with the general worsening of the food situation, they are actually starving. And yet these starving workers, surrounded by the malicious counter-revolutionary agitation of the bourgeoisie, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, organize "Communist subbotniks," work overtime *without any pay*, and achieve *an enormous increase in productivity of labour* in spite of the fact that they are weary, tormented, exhausted by starvation. Is this not magnificent heroism? Is this not the beginning of a change of world-historic significance?

In the last analysis, productivity of labour is the most important, the principal thing for the victory of the new social

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clearer and more obvious to us the more the content of the proletarian revolution unfolds. The "formulae" of genuine Communism differ from the pompous, involved, solemn phrasemongering of the Kautskys, the Mensheviks and the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their beloved "brethren" of Berne in that they reduce everything to the *conditions of labour*. Less chatter about "industrial democracy," about "liberty, equality and fraternity," about "government by the people," and all such stuff; the class-conscious workers and peasants of our day see the dishonesty of the bourgeois intellectual through these pompous phrases as easily as the ordinary person with common sense and experience, in glancing at the irreproachably "smooth" features and dapper appearance of the "fain fellow, dontcher know," immediately and unerringly puts him down as "in all probability, a scoundrel."

Fewer pompous phrases, more plain, *everyday* work, concern for the pood of grain and the pood of coal! More concern for supplying this pood of grain and the pood of coal that the hungry workers and ragged and barefooted peasants need, not by means of *huckstering*, not in a capitalist manner, but by means of the class-conscious, voluntary, boundlessly heroic labour of plain working men like the unskilled labourers and railwaymen on the Moscow-Kazan Railway.

We must all admit that traces of the bourgeois-intellectual phrasemongering approach to questions of the revolution are observed at every step, everywhere, even in our ranks. Our press, for example, does not fight sufficiently against these putrid survivals of the decayed, bourgeois-democratic past; it does not render sufficient assistance to the simple, modest, everyday but virile shoots of genuine Communism.

Take the position of women. Not a single democratic party in the world, not even in the most advanced bourgeois republic, has done in tens of years a hundredth part of what we did in the very first year we were in power. In the literal sense of the word, we did not leave a single brick standing of the despicable laws which placed women in a state of inferiority compared with men, of the laws restricting divorce, of the disgusting formalities connected with divorce, of the laws on il-

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far more *organizing talent* among the working women and peasant women than we are aware of, people who are able to organize in a practical way and enlist large numbers of workers, and a still larger number of consumers, for this purpose without the abundance of phrases, fuss, squabbling and chatter about plans, systems, etc., which our swelled-headed "intelligentsia" or half-baked "Communists" "suffer" from. But we do *not nurse* these new shoots with sufficient care.

Look at the bourgeoisie! How well it is able to advertise what it requires! See how what the capitalists regard as "model" enterprises are praised in millions of copies of *their* newspapers; see how "model" bourgeois institutions are transformed into objects of national pride! Our press does not take the trouble, or hardly takes the trouble, to describe the best dining rooms or crèches, in order by daily exhortation to secure the transformation of some of them into models. It does not give them enough publicity, does not describe in detail what saving in human labour, what conveniences for the consumer, what a saving in products, what emancipation of women from domestic slavery and what an improvement in sanitary conditions can be achieved with *exemplary Communist labour* for the whole of society, for all the toilers.

Exemplary production, exemplary Communist subbotniks, exemplary care and conscientiousness in procuring and distributing every pood of grain, exemplary dining rooms, exemplary cleanliness in such-and-such a workers' apartment house, in such-and-such a block—all these should receive ten times more attention and care from our press, as well as from *every* workers' and peasants' organization, than they receive now. All these are the young shoots of Communism; and nursing these shoots should be our common and primary duty. Difficult as our food and production situation may be, we can point to undoubted progress during the year and a half of Bolshevik rule *along the whole front*. Grain collections have increased from 30,000,000 poods (from August 1, 1917, to August 1, 1918) to 100,000,000 poods (from August 1, 1918, to May 1, 1919); vegetable gardening has increased, the margin of unsown land has diminished, railway transport has begun to improve notwithstanding the enormous fuel difficulties, and so on. Against this

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workers on the Moscow-Kazan Railway *first showed by deeds* that they are capable of working like Communists, and then adopted the title of "Communist subbotniks" for their undertaking. We must see to it that in future everyone who calls his enterprise, institution or undertaking a commune *without having set an example* of real Communist organization, achieved as a result of hard work and practical success in prolonged effort, shall be made a laughing-stock, and mercilessly pilloried as a charlatan or a windbag.

The great beginning of "Communist subbotniks" must also be utilized for another purpose—for *purging* the Party. It was absolutely inevitable in the first period after the revolution; when the masses of "honest" and philistine-minded people were particularly timorous, and when the whole of the bourgeois intelligentsia, including, of course, the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries, sabotaged us and cringed before the bourgeoisie, it was absolutely inevitable that adventurers and other pernicious elements should attach themselves to the ruling party. Not a single revolution has been able to avoid that. The whole point is that the ruling party should be able, relying on a sound and strong advanced class, to purge its ranks.

We started on this work long ago. We must continue it steadily and untiringly. The mobilization of Communists for the war helped us in this respect: the cowards and scoundrels fled from the Party. A good riddance! *Such* a reduction in membership is an *enormous increase* in its strength and weight. We must continue the purging, and utilize the beginning made in "Communist subbotniks" for this purpose, *i.e.*, accept members only after six months', say, "trial," or "probation," in "working in a revolutionary way." All members of the Party who joined after October 25, 1917 and who have not proved by some special work or service that they are absolutely reliable, loyal and capable of being Communists, should be put to the same test.

The purging of the Party, owing to the *higher demands* it will make in regard to working in a genuinely Communist way, will improve the state *apparatus*, and will bring ever so much nearer the *final transition* of the peasants to the side of the revolutionary proletariat.

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June 1919

and in the handbooks which are available in your library for the pupils of the Soviet and Party school; and although, again, some of you may at first be dismayed by the difficulty of the exposition, I must again warn you that you should not be perturbed by this fact and that what is unclear at a first reading will become clear at a second reading, or when you subsequently approach the question from a somewhat different angle. For I once more repeat that the question is so complex and has been so confused by bourgeois scholars and writers that anybody who desires to study this question seriously and to master it independently must attack it several times, return to it again and again and consider the question from various angles in order to attain a clear and definite understanding of it. And it will be all the easier to return to this question because it is such a fundamental, such a basic question of all politics, and because not only in such stormy and revolutionary times as the present, but even in the most peaceful times, you will come across this question in any newspaper in connection with any economic or political question. Every day, in one connection or another, you will be returning to this question: what is the state, what is its nature, what is its significance and what is the attitude of our Party, the Party that is fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the Communist Party—what is its attitude to the state? And the chief thing is that as a result of your reading, as a result of the talks and lectures you will hear on the state, you should acquire the ability to approach this question independently, since you will be meeting this question on the most varied occasions, in connection with the most trifling questions, in the most unexpected conjunctures, and in discussions and disputes with opponents. Only when you learn to find your way about independently in this question may you consider yourself sufficiently confirmed in your convictions and able with sufficient success to defend them against anybody and at any time.

After these brief remarks, I shall proceed to deal with the question itself—what is the state, how did it arise and what fundamentally should be the attitude to the state of the Party of the working class, which is fighting for the complete overthrow of capitalism—the Communist Party?

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a struggle which is reflected or expressed in the conflict of views on the state, in the estimate of the role and significance of the state.

To approach this question as scientifically as possible we must cast at least a fleeting glance back on the history of the rise and development of the state. The most reliable thing in a question of social science and one that is most necessary in order really to acquire the habit of approaching this question correctly and not allowing oneself to get lost in the mass of detail or in the immense variety of conflicting opinions—the most important thing in order to approach this question scientifically is not to forget the underlying historical connection, to examine every question from the standpoint of how the given phenomenon arose in history and what principal stages this phenomenon passed through in its development, and, from the standpoint of its development, to examine what the given thing has become today.

I hope that in connection with the question of the state you will acquaint yourselves with Engels' book *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. This is one of the fundamental works of modern Socialism, every phrase of which can be accepted with confidence, in the assurance that it has not been said at random but is based on immense historical and political material. Undoubtedly, not all the parts of this work have been expounded in an equally popular and comprehensible way: some of them assume that the reader already possesses certain knowledge of history and economics. But I again repeat that you should not be perturbed if on reading this work you do not understand it at once. That hardly happens to anyone. But returning to it later, when your interest has been aroused, you will succeed in understanding the greater part of it, if not the whole of it. I mention this book because it gives the correct approach to the question in the sense mentioned. It begins with a historical sketch of the origin of the state.

In order to approach this question correctly, as every other question, for example, the question of the origin of capitalism, the exploitation of man by man, Socialism, how Socialism arose, what conditions gave rise to it—every such question can

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If we abstract ourselves from the so-called religious teachings, subtleties, philosophical arguments and the various opinions advanced by bourgeois scholars, and try to get at the real essence of the matter, we shall find that the state really does amount to such an apparatus of rule separated out from human society. When there appears such a special group of men who are occupied with ruling and nothing else, and who in order to rule need a special apparatus of coercion and of subjugating the will of others by force—prisons, special detachments of men, armies, etc.—there appears the state.

But there was a time when there was no state, when general ties, society itself, discipline and the ordering of work were maintained by force of custom and tradition, or by the authority or the respect enjoyed by the elders of the clan or by women—who in those times not only frequently enjoyed equal status with men, but not infrequently enjoyed even a higher status—and when there was no special category of persons, specialists in ruling. History shows that the state as a special apparatus for coercing people arose only wherever and whenever there appeared a division of society into classes, that is, a division into groups of people some of whom are permanently in a position to appropriate the labour of others, when some people exploit others.

And this division of society into classes must always be clearly borne in mind as a fundamental fact of history. The development of all human societies for thousands of years, in all countries without exception, reveals a general conformity to law, regularity and consistency in this development; so that at first we had a society without classes—the first patriarchal, primitive society, in which there were no aristocrats; then we had a society based on slavery—a slaveowning society. The whole of modern civilized Europe has passed through this stage—slavery ruled supreme two thousand years ago. The vast majority of the peoples of other parts of the world also passed through this stage. Among the less developed peoples traces of slavery survive to this day; you will find the institution of slavery in Africa, for example, at the present time. Slaveowners and slaves were the first important class divisions. The former group not only owned all the means of

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mass of labourers, the majority of whom are proletarians, wage workers, that procure their livelihood in the process of production only by the sale of their own worker's hands, their labour power. With the transition to capitalism, the peasants, who were already impoverished and downtrodden in feudal times, were converted partly (the majority) into proletarians, and partly (the minority) into wealthy peasants who themselves hired workers and who constituted a rural bourgeoisie.

This fundamental fact—the transition of society from primitive forms of slavery to serfdom and finally to capitalism—you must always bear in mind, for only by remembering this fundamental fact, only by inserting all political doctrines into this fundamental framework will you be able properly to appraise these doctrines and to understand what they refer to; for each of these great periods in the history of mankind—slaveowning, feudal and capitalist—embraces scores and hundreds of centuries and presents such a mass of political forms, such a variety of political doctrines, opinions and revolutions, that we can understand this extreme diversity and immense variety—especially in connection with the political, philosophical and other doctrines of bourgeois scholars and politicians—only if we firmly hold to the guiding thread, this division of society into classes and this change in the forms of class rule, and from this standpoint examine all social questions—economic, political, spiritual, religious, etc.

If you examine the state from the standpoint of this fundamental division, you will find that before the division of society into classes, as I have already said, no state existed. But as the social division into classes arose and took firm root, as class society arose, the state also arose and took firm root. The history of mankind knows scores and hundreds of countries that have passed through and are still passing through slavery, feudalism and capitalism. In each of these countries, despite the immense historical changes that have taken place, despite all the political vicissitudes and all the revolutions associated with this development of mankind. in the transition from slavery through feudalism to capitalism and to the present world-wide struggle against capitalism, you will always discern the rise of the state. It has always been a certain apparatus which sep-

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of this class of slaveowners took firm root—then in order that it might take firm root it was essential that a state should appear.

And this state did appear—the slaveowning state, an apparatus which gave the slaveowners power and enabled them to rule over the slaves. Both society and the state were then much smaller than they are now, they possessed an incomparably weaker apparatus of communication—the modern means of communication did not then exist. Mountains, rivers and seas were immeasurably greater obstacles than they are now, and the formation of the state was confined within far narrower geographical boundaries. A technically weak state apparatus served a state confined within relatively narrow boundaries and a narrow circle of action. Nevertheless, there did exist an apparatus which compelled the slaves to remain in slavery, which kept one part of society subjugated to and oppressed by another. It is impossible to compel the greater part of society to work systematically for the other part of society without a permanent apparatus of coercion. So long as there were no classes, there was no apparatus like this. When classes appeared, everywhere and always as this division grew and took firmer hold, there also appeared a special institution—the state. The forms of state were extremely varied. During the period of slavery we already find diverse forms of the state in the most advanced, cultured and most civilized countries according to the standards of the time, for example, in ancient Greece and Rome, which rested entirely on slavery. At that time the difference was already arising between the monarchy and the republic, between the aristocracy and the democracy. A monarchy is the power of a single person, a republic is the absence of any non-elected power; an aristocracy is the power of a relatively small minority, a democracy is the power of the people (democracy in Greek literally means the power of the people). All these differences arose in the epoch of slavery. Despite these differences, the state of the slaveowning epoch was a slaveowning state, irrespective of whether it was a monarchy or a republic, aristocratic or democratic.

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work a definite number of days for himself on the plot assigned to him by the landlord; on the other days the peasant serf worked for this lord. The essence of class society remained: society was based on class exploitation. Only the landlords could enjoy full rights; the peasants had no rights at all. In practice their condition differed very little from the condition of slaves in the slaveowning state. Nevertheless a wider road was opened for their emancipation, for the emancipation of the peasants, since the peasant serf was not regarded as the direct property of the landlord. He could work part of his time on his own plot, could, so to speak, belong to himself to a certain extent; and with the wider opportunities for the development of exchange and trade relations the feudal system steadily disintegrated and the scope of emancipation of the peasantry steadily widened. Feudal society was always more complex than slave society. There was a greater element of the development of trade and industry, which even in those days led to capitalism. In the Middle Ages feudalism predominated. And here too the forms of state differed, here too we find both monarchies and republics, although much more weakly expressed. But always the feudal landlord was regarded as the only ruler. The peasant serfs were absolutely excluded from all political rights.

Both under slavery and under the feudal system the small minority of people could not dominate over the vast majority without coercion. History is full of the constant attempts of the oppressed classes to rid themselves of oppression. The history of slavery contains records of wars of emancipation from slavery which lasted for decades. Incidentally, the name "Spartacist" now adopted by the German Communists—the only German party which is really fighting the yoke of capitalism—was adopted by them because Spartacus was one of the most prominent heroes of one of the greatest revolts of slaves which took place about two thousand years ago. For many years the apparently omnipotent Roman Empire, which rested entirely on slavery, experienced the shocks and blows of a vast uprising of slaves who armed and united to form a vast army under the leadership of Spartacus. In the end they were defeated, captured and tortured by the slaveowners. Such civil

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fore the law irrespective of what capital they owned; whether they owned land as private property, or were starvelings who owned nothing but their labour power—they were all equal before the law. The law protects everybody equally; it protects the property of those who have it from attack by the masses who, possessing no property, possessing nothing but their labour power, grow steadily impoverished and ruined and become converted into proletarians. Such is capitalist society.

I cannot dwell on it in detail. You will return to this question when you come to discuss the program of the Party—you will then hear a description of capitalist society. This society advanced against serfdom, against the old feudal system, under the slogan of liberty. But it was liberty for those who owned property. And when feudalism was shattered, which occurred at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century—it occurred in Russia later than in other countries, in 1861—the feudal state was superseded by the capitalist state, which proclaims liberty for the whole people as its slogan, which declares that it expresses the will of the whole people and denies that it is a class state. And here there developed a struggle between the Socialists, who are fighting for the liberty of the whole people, and the capitalist state—a struggle which has now led to the creation of the Soviet Socialist Republic and which embraces the whole world.

To understand the struggle that has been started against world capital, to understand the essence of the capitalist state, we must remember that when the capitalist state advanced against the feudal state it entered the fight under the slogan of liberty. The abolition of feudalism meant liberty for the representatives of the capitalist state and served their purpose, inasmuch as feudalism was breaking down and the peasants had acquired the opportunity of owning as their full property the land which they had purchased for compensation or in part by quit rent—this did not concern the state: it protected property no matter how it arose, since it rested on private property. The peasants became private owners in all the modern civilized states. Even when the landlord surrendered part of his land to the peasant, the state protected private property, rewarding the landlord by compensation, sale for money. The

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You will not find a single newspaper which does not repeat the current accusation that the Bolsheviks violate popular rule. If our Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries in their simplicity of heart (perhaps it is not simplicity, or perhaps it is the simplicity which they say is worse than robbery) think that they discovered and invented the accusation that the Bolsheviks have violated liberty and popular rule, they are ludicrously mistaken. Today not a single one of the rich newspapers in the wealthy countries, which spend tens of millions on their distribution and disseminate bourgeois lies and the imperialist policy in tens of millions of copies—there is not one of these newspapers which does not repeat these fundamental arguments and accusations against Bolshevism, namely, that America, England and Switzerland are advanced states based on popular rule, whereas the Bolshevik Republic is a state of bandits in which liberty is unknown, and that the Bolsheviks have violated the idea of popular rule and have even gone so far as to disperse the Constituent Assembly. These terrible accusations against the Bolsheviks are repeated all over the world. These accusations bring us fully up against the question—what is the state? In order to understand these accusations, in order to examine them and have a fully intelligent attitude towards them, and not to examine them on hearsay but with a firm opinion of our own, we must have a clear idea of what the state is. Here we have capitalist states of every kind and the theories in defence of them which were created before the war. In order to proceed to answer the question properly we must critically examine all these doctrines and views.

I have already advised you to turn for help to Engels' book, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. This book says that every state in which private property in land and in the means of production exists, in which capital prevails, however democratic it may be, is a capitalist state, a machine used by the capitalists to keep the working class and the poor peasants in subjection; while universal suffrage, a Constituent Assembly, parliament are merely a form, a sort of promissory note, which does not alter matters in any essential way.

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It is not only the conscious hypocrites, scientists and priests that uphold and defend the bourgeois lie that the state is free and that it is its duty to defend the interests of all, but also a large number of people who sincerely adhere to the old prejudices and who cannot understand the transition from the old capitalist society to Socialism. It is not only people who are directly dependent on the bourgeoisie, not only those who are oppressed by the yoke of capital or who have been bribed by capital (there are a large number of all sorts of scientists, artists, priests, etc., in the service of capital), but even people who are simply under the sway of the prejudice of bourgeois liberty that have taken up arms against Bolshevism all over the world because of the fact that when it was founded the Soviet Republic rejected these bourgeois lies and openly declared: you say that your state is free, whereas in reality, as long as there is private property, your state, even if it is a democratic republic, is nothing but a machine used by the capitalists to suppress the workers, and the freer the state, the more clearly is this expressed. Examples of this are Switzerland in Europe and the United States in the Americas. Nowhere does capital rule so cynically and ruthlessly, and nowhere is this so apparent, as in these countries, although they are democratic republics, no matter how finely they are painted and notwithstanding all the talk about labour democracy and the equality of all citizens. The fact is that in Switzerland and America capital dominates, and every attempt of the workers to achieve the slightest real improvement in their condition is immediately met by civil war. There are fewer soldiers, a smaller standing army in these countries—Switzerland has a militia and every Swiss has a gun at home, while in America there was no standing army until quite recently—and so when there is a strike the bourgeoisie arms, hires soldiery and suppresses the strike; and nowhere is this suppression of the working-class movement accompanied by such ruthless severity as in Switzerland and in America, and nowhere does the influence of capital in parliament manifest itself as powerfully as in these countries. The power of capital is everything, the stock exchange is everything, while parliament and elections are marionettes, puppets. . . . But the eyes of the workers are being

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## **ECONOMICS AND POLITICS IN THE ERA OF THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT**

I had intended in connection with the second anniversary of the Soviet government to write a small pamphlet dealing with the subject indicated in the title. But owing to the rush of everyday work I have been unable so far to get beyond the preliminary preparations for certain of the sections. I have therefore decided to try the experiment of a brief, summarized exposition of what, in my opinion, are the chief thoughts on the subject. A summarized exposition, of course, possesses many disadvantages and shortcomings. But perhaps for a short article in a journal a modest aim will nevertheless prove achievable, namely, to present a statement of the problem and the groundwork for its discussion by the Communists in the various countries.

### **I**

Theoretically, there can be no doubt that between capitalism and Communism there lies a definite transition period. The latter cannot but combine the features and properties of both these systems of social economy. This transition period cannot but be a period of struggle between moribund capitalism and nascent Communism—in other words, between capitalism which has been defeated but not yet destroyed and Communism which has been born but which is still very feeble.

The necessity for a whole historical era distinguished by these features of a transition period should be obvious not only to a Marxist, but to every educated person who is in any degree acquainted with the theory of development. Yet all the talk on

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state-owned enterprises on a national scale, is distributing labour power among the various branches of production and the various enterprises, and is distributing to the toilers large quantities of articles of consumption belonging to the state.

We say "the first steps" of Communism in Russia (so spoken of also in the program of our Party adopted in March 1919), because all these conditions have been only partially achieved in our country, or, to put it otherwise, the achievement of these conditions is only in its early stages. We accomplished instantly, at one revolutionary blow, all that can be instantly accomplished in general: for instance, on the first day of the dictatorship of the proletariat, October 26 [November 8], 1917, private property in land was abolished without compensation to the large owners; the large landowners were expropriated. Within the space of a few months practically all the large capitalists, owners of mills and factories, joint-stock companies, banks, railways, and so forth, were also expropriated without compensation. The state organization of large-scale production in industry and the transition from "workers' control" to "workers' administration" of factories, mills and railways—that, in the main, has already been accomplished; but in relation to agriculture it had only just begun ("state farms," *i.e.*, large farms organized by the workers' state-owned land). Similarly, we have only just begun the organization of various forms of co-operative societies of small husbandmen as a transition from petty commodity agriculture to Communist agriculture.<sup>1</sup> The same must be said of the state organization of the distribution of products in place of private trade, *i.e.*, the state collection and state delivery of grain to the cities and of industrial products to the countryside. Available statistical data on this question will be given below.

Peasant farming continues to be petty commodity production. Here we have an extremely broad and profoundly and firmly rooted basis for capitalism. On this basis capitalism has

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be seen from the following summarized figures. The Central Statistical Board has just prepared statistics for the press regarding the production and consumption of grain, not, it is true, for the whole of Soviet Russia, but for twenty-six of her provinces.

The results are as follows:

26 Provinces of Soviet Russia	Population, in Millions		Production of grain (excluding seed and fodder), in millions of poods	Grain delivered, in millions of poods		Total amount of grain at disposal of population, in millions of poods	Grain consumption per capita of population, in poods
				Commissariat of Food	Profiteers		
Producing provinces . . . . .	Urban	4.4	—	20.9	20.6	41.5	9.6
	Rural	28.6	625.4	—	—	481.8	16.9
Consuming provinces . . . . .	Urban	5.9	—	20.0	20.0	40.0	6.8
	Rural	13.8	114.0	12.1	27.8	151.4	11.0
Total —	(26 provinces) —	52.7	739.4	53.0	68.4	714.7	13.6

Thus, approximately half the amount of grain supplied to the cities is provided by the Commissariat of Food and the other half by the profiteers. This same proportion is revealed by a careful investigation, made in 1918, of the food consumed by city workers. In this connection it should be borne in mind that for bread supplied by the state the worker pays *one-ninth* of what he pays the profiteer. The profiteering price for bread is *ten times* greater than the state price. That is what is revealed by a careful investigation of workers' budgets.

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accomplished, but it is only a part, and moreover, *not* the most difficult part. In order to abolish classes one must, secondly, abolish the difference between workingman and peasant, *one must make them all workers*. This cannot be done all at once. This task is incomparably more difficult and will of necessity be a protracted one. This task cannot be accomplished by overthrowing a class. It can be solved only by the organizational reconstruction of the whole social economy, by a transition from individual, disunited, petty commodity production to large-scale social production. This transition must of necessity be extremely protracted. This transition may only be delayed and complicated by hasty and incautious administrative legislation. The transition can be accelerated only by affording such assistance to the peasant as will enable him to improve his whole technique of agriculture immeasurably, to reform it radically.

In order to solve the second and most difficult part of the problem, the proletariat, after having defeated the bourgeoisie, must unswervingly conduct its policy towards the peasantry along the following fundamental lines: the proletariat must separate, demarcate the peasant toiler from the peasant owner, the peasant worker from the peasant huckster, the peasant who labours from the peasant who profiteers.

In this demarcation lies the *whole essence* of Socialism.

And it is not surprising that the Socialists in word but petty-bourgeois democrats in deed (the Martovs, the Chernovs, the Kautskys, and so on) do not understand this essence of Socialism.

The demarcation we here refer to is extremely difficult, for in actual life all the features of the "peasant," however different they may be, however contradictory they may be, are fused into one whole. Nevertheless, demarcation is possible; not only is it possible, but it inevitably follows from the conditions of peasant economy and peasant life. The toiling peasant has for ages been oppressed by the landlords, the capitalists, the hucksters and the profiteers and by *their* state, including even the most democratic bourgeois republics. Throughout the ages the toiling peasant has cherished hatred and enmity towards the oppressors and the exploiters, and this

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former to rob the latter. And those educated people who refuse to recognize this difference we shall treat as Whiteguards, even though they may call themselves democrats, Socialists, internationalists, Kautskys, Chernovs and Martovs.

## V

Socialism means the abolition of classes. The dictatorship of the proletariat has done all it could to abolish classes. But classes cannot be abolished all at once.

And classes *remain* and *will remain* in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat. When classes disappear the dictatorship will become unnecessary. Without the dictatorship of the proletariat they will not disappear.

Classes have remained, but in the era of the dictatorship of the proletariat *every* class has undergone a change, and the relations between the classes have also changed. The class struggle does not disappear under the dictatorship of the proletariat; it merely assumes different forms.

Under capitalism the proletariat was an oppressed class, a class deprived of all ownership in the means of production; it was the only class which stood directly and completely opposed to the bourgeoisie, and therefore it alone was capable of being revolutionary to the very end. Having overthrown the bourgeoisie and conquered political power, the proletariat has become the *ruling* class; it holds the power of the state, it has the disposal of the means of production, which have now become social; it leads the wavering and intermediary elements and classes; it crushes the growing energy of resistance of the exploiters. All these are *specific* tasks of the class struggle, tasks which the proletariat formerly did not set itself, and could not have set itself.

The class of exploiters, the landlords and capitalists, has not disappeared under the dictatorship of the proletariat; and it cannot disappear all at once. The exploiters have been smashed, but not destroyed. They still have an international base in the form of international capital, a branch of which they represent. They still retain a part of the means of production, they still have money, they still have vast social connec-

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inherited from the bourgeoisie as to the absolute, classless nature of "democracy." As a matter of fact, democracy itself passes into an entirely new phase under the dictatorship of the proletariat, while the class struggle is raised to a higher level and dominates over each and every form.

General talk about freedom, equality and democracy is in fact but a stereotyped repetition of conceptions which are only a cast from the relations of commodity production. To attempt to solve the concrete problems of the dictatorship of the proletariat by means of such general talk is to accept the theories and principles of the bourgeoisie all along the line. From the point of view of the proletariat, the question can be put only in the following way: freedom from the oppression of which class? equality between which classes? democracy based on private property, or on the struggle for the abolition of private property?—and so forth.

Long ago Engels in his *Anti-Dühring* explained that the conception of equality is a cast from the relations of commodity production and becomes transformed into a prejudice if equality is not understood to mean the *abolition of classes*. This elementary truth regarding the distinction between the bourgeois democratic and the Socialist conceptions of equality is constantly being forgotten. But if it is not forgotten, it becomes obvious that by overthrowing the bourgeoisie the proletariat takes a decisive step towards the abolition of classes, and that in order to complete the process the proletariat must continue its class struggle, making use of the apparatus of state power and of all methods of combating, influencing and bringing pressure to bear on the overthrown bourgeoisie and the vacillating petty bourgeoisie.

(To be continued)<sup>1</sup>

October 30, 1919

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training and education of the youth must proceed from the material that was bequeathed to us by the old society. We can build Communism only from the sum of knowledge, organizations and institutions, only with the stock of human forces and means that were bequeathed to us by the old society. Only by radically remoulding the teaching, organization and training of the youth shall we be able to ensure that the result of the efforts of the younger generation will be the creation of a society that will be unlike the old society, *i.e.*, a Communist society.

That is why we must deal in detail with the question of what we should teach the youth and how the youth should learn if it really wants to justify the name of Communist youth, and how it should be trained so as to be able to complete and perfect what we have started.

I must say that the first and most natural reply would seem to be that the Youth League, and the youth that wants to pass to Communism as a whole, should learn Communism.

But this reply—"learn Communism"—is too general. What do we need in order to learn Communism? What must be singled out from the sum of general knowledge to acquire a knowledge of Communism? Here a number of dangers arise, which often confront us when the task of learning Communism is presented incorrectly, or when it is interpreted too one-sidedly.

Naturally, the first thought that enters one's mind is that learning Communism means imbibing the sum of knowledge that is contained in Communist textbooks, pamphlets and books. But such a definition of the study of Communism would be too crude and inadequate.

If the study of Communism consisted solely in imbibing what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets, we might all too easily obtain Communist text-jugglers or braggarts, and this would very often cause us harm and damage, because such people, having learned by rote what is contained in Communist books and pamphlets would be incapable of combining this knowledge, and would be unable to act in the way Communism really demands.

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constantly hear levelled at the old school, and which often lead to totally wrong conclusions.

It is said that the old school was a school of cramming, grinding, learning by rote. That is true; nevertheless, we must distinguish between what was bad in the old school and what is useful for us, and we must be able to choose from what is necessary for Communism.

The old school was a school of cramming; it compelled pupils to imbibe a mass of useless, superfluous, barren knowledge, which clogged the brain and transformed the younger generation into officials turned out to pattern. But you would be committing a great mistake if you attempted to draw the conclusion that one can become a Communist without acquiring what human knowledge has accumulated. It would be a mistake to think that it is enough to learn Communist slogans, the conclusions of Communist science, without acquiring the sum of knowledge of which Communism itself is a consequence.

Marxism is an example of how Communism arose out of the sum of human knowledge.

You have read and heard that Communist theory, the science of Communism, mainly created by Marx, that this doctrine of Marxism has ceased to be the product of a single Socialist of the nineteenth century, even though he was a genius, and that it has become the doctrine of millions and tens of millions of proletarians all over the world, who are applying this doctrine in their struggle against capitalism.

And if you were to ask why the doctrines of Marx were able to capture the hearts of millions and tens of millions of the most revolutionary class, you would receive only one answer: it was because Marx took his stand on the firm foundation of the human knowledge acquired under capitalism. Having studied the laws of development of human society, Marx realized that the development of capitalism was inevitably leading to Communism. And the principal thing is that he proved this only on the basis of the most exact, most detailed and most profound study of this capitalist society; and this he was able to do because he had fully assimilated all that earlier science had taught.

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board, and a Communist would become a mere braggart, if all the knowledge he has obtained were not digested in his mind. You must not only assimilate this knowledge, you must assimilate it critically, so as not to cram your mind with useless lumber, but enrich it with all those facts that are indispensable to the modern man of education.

If a Communist took it into his head to boast about his Communism because of the ready-made conclusions he had acquired, without putting in a great deal of serious and hard work, without understanding the facts which he must examine critically, he would be a very deplorable Communist. Such superficiality would be decidedly fatal. If I know that I know little, I shall strive to learn more; but if a man says that he is a Communist and that he need know nothing thoroughly, he will never be anything like a Communist.

The old school turned out servants needed by the capitalists; the old school transformed men of science into men who had to write and say what pleased the capitalists. Therefore we must abolish it. But does the fact that we must abolish it, destroy it, mean that we must not take from it all that mankind has accumulated for the benefit of man?

Does it mean that it is not our duty to distinguish between what was necessary for capitalism and what is necessary for Communism?

We are replacing the old drill-sergeant methods that were employed in bourgeois society in opposition to the will of the majority by the class-conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, who combine hatred of the old society with the determination, ability and readiness to unite and organize their forces for this fight, in order to transform the wills of millions and hundreds of millions of people, disunited, dispersed and scattered over the territory of a huge country, into a single will; for without this single will we shall inevitably be defeated. Without this solidarity, without this conscious discipline of the workers and peasants, our cause will be hopeless. Without this we shall be unable to beat the capitalists and landlords of the whole world. We shall not even consolidate the foundation, let alone build a new Communist society on this foundation.

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unist and who clearly understands that by joining the Young Communist League he has pledged himself to help the Party to build Communism and to help the whole younger generation to create a Communist society. He must realize that he can create it only on the basis of modern education; and if he does not acquire this education Communism will remain a pious wish.

The task of the old generation was to overthrow the bourgeoisie. The main task in their day was to criticize the bourgeoisie, to arouse hatred of the bourgeoisie among the masses, to develop class consciousness and the ability to unite their forces.

The new generation is confronted with a much more complicated task. Not only have you to combine all your forces to uphold the power of the workers and peasants against the attacks of the capitalists. That you must do. That you have clearly understood and it is distinctly perceived by every Communist. But it is not enough.

You must build up a Communist society. In many respects the first half of the work has been done. The old order has been destroyed, as it deserved to be, it has been transformed into a heap of ruins, as it deserved to be. The ground has been cleared, and on this ground the young Communist generation must build a Communist society.

You are faced with the task of construction, and you can cope with it only by mastering all modern knowledge, only if you are able to transform Communism from ready-made, memorized formulas, counsels, recipes, prescriptions and programs into that living thing which unites your immediate work, and only if you are able to transform Communism into a guide for your practical work.

This is the task by which you should be guided in educating, training and rousing the whole of the younger generation. You must be the foremost among the millions of builders of Communist society, which every young man and young woman should be.

Unless you enlist the whole mass of young workers and peasants in the works of building Communism, you will not build a Communist society.

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This unity could be created only by factories and workshops, only by the proletariat, trained and roused from its long slumber. Only when that class was formed did the mass movement begin, which led to what we see now—the victory of the proletarian revolution in one of the weakest of countries, which for three years has been resisting the onslaught of the bourgeoisie of the whole world.

And we see that the proletarian revolution is growing all over the world. We now say, on the basis of experience, that only the proletariat could have created that compact force which the disunited and scattered peasantry are following and which has withstood all the onslaughts of the exploiters. Only this class can help the toiling masses to unite, rally their ranks and definitely defend, definitely consolidate and definitely build up Communist society.

That is why we say that for us there is no such thing as morality apart from human society; it is a fraud. Morality for us is subordinated to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

What does this class struggle mean? It means overthrowing the tsar, overthrowing the capitalists, abolishing the capitalist class.

And what are classes in general? Classes are what permits one section of society to appropriate the labour of the other section.

If one section of society appropriates all the land, we have a landlord class and a peasant class. If one section of society possesses the mills and factories, shares and capital, while another section works in these factories, we have a capitalist class and a proletarian class.

It was not difficult to drive out the tsar—that required only a few days. It was not very difficult to drive out the landlords—that was done in a few months. Nor was it very difficult to drive out the capitalists.

But it is incomparably more difficult to abolish classes; we still have the division into workers and peasants. If the peasant is settled on his separate plot of land and appropriates superfluous grain, that is, grain that he does not need for him-

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No, I would be behaving like an exploiter, like a proprietor. This must be combated.

If this is allowed to go on we shall slide back to the rule of the capitalists, to the rule of the bourgeoisie, as has more than once happened in previous revolutions. And in order to prevent the restoration of the rule of the capitalists and the bourgeoisie we must not allow profiteering, we must not allow individuals to enrich themselves at the expense of the rest, and all the toilers must unite with the proletariat and form a Communist society.

This is the principal feature of the fundamental task of the League and of the organizations of the Communist youth.

The old society was based on the principle: rob or be robbed, work for others or make others work for you, be a slaveowner or a slave. Naturally, people brought up in such a society imbibe with their mother's milk, so to speak, the psychology, the habit, the concept: you are either a slaveowner or a slave or else, a small owner, a small employee, a small official, an intellectual—in short, a man who thinks only of himself, and doesn't give a hang for anybody else.

If I work this plot of land, I don't give a hang for anybody else; if others starve, all the better, the more I will get for my grain. If I have a job as a doctor, engineer, teacher, or clerk, I don't give a hang for anybody else. Perhaps if I toady to and please the powers that be I shall keep my job, and even get on in life and become a bourgeois. A Communist cannot have such a psychology and such sentiments.

When the workers and peasants proved that they were able by their own efforts to defend themselves and create a new society, a new Communist training began, a training in fighting the exploiters, a training in forming an alliance with the proletariat against the self-seekers and small owners, against the psychology and habits which say: I seek my own profit and I don't give a hang for anything else.

This is the reply to the question how the young and rising generation should learn Communism.

It can learn Communism only by linking up every step in its studies, training and education with the continuous struggle

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of them. At the same time, as long as people attend school, it must make them participants in the struggle for emancipation from the exploiters.

The Young Communist League will justify its name as the League of the young Communist generation when it links up every step in its teaching, training and education with participation in the general struggle of all the toilers against the exploiters. For you know perfectly well that as long as Russia remains the only workers' republic, while the old bourgeois system exists in the rest of the world, we shall be weaker than they, we shall be under the constant menace of a new attack; and that only if we learn to be solid and united shall we win in the further struggle and—having gained strength—become really invincible.

Thus, to be a Communist means that you must organize and unite the whole rising generation and set an example of training and discipline in this struggle. Then you will be able to start building the edifice of Communist society and bring it to completion.

In order to make this clearer to all I will quote an example. We call ourselves Communists.

What is a Communist?

Communist is a Latin word. Communist is derived from the word "common." Communist society is a society in which all things—the land, the factories—are owned in common. Communism means working in common.

Is it possible to work in common if each one works separately on his own plot of land? Work in common cannot be brought about all at once. It does not drop from the skies. It comes by toil and suffering, it is created in the course of struggle. Old books are of no use here; no one will believe them. One's own living experience is required.

When Kolchak and Denikin advanced from Siberia and the South the peasants were on their side. They did not like Bolshevism because the Bolsheviks took their grain at a fixed price. But when the peasants in Siberia and the Ukraine experienced the rule of Kolchak and Denikin, they realized that they had only one alternative: either to go to the capitalist, and he would at once hand them over into slavery to the landlord;

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Being a member of the Youth League means devoting one's labour and efforts to the common cause. That is what Communist training means. Only in the course of such work does a young man or woman become a real Communist. Only in this way, only if they achieve practical results in this work will they become Communists.

Take, for example, work on the suburban vegetable gardens. This is one of the duties of the Young Communist League. The people are starving; there is starvation in the mills and factories. In order to save ourselves from starvation, vegetable gardens must be developed. But agriculture is being carried on in the old way.

Therefore, more class-conscious elements should undertake this work, and you would then find that the number of vegetable gardens would increase, their area grow, and the results improve. The Young Communist League should take an active part in this work. Every League and every branch of the League should regard this as its job.

The Young Communist League should be a shock group, helping in every job and displaying initiative and enterprise. The League should be such that any worker may see that it consists of people whose doctrines he may not understand, whose doctrines he perhaps may not immediately believe, but whose practical work and activity prove to him that they are really the people who are showing him the right road.

If the Young Communist League fails to organize its work in this way in all fields, it will show that it is slipping into the old bourgeois road.

We must combine our training with the struggle of the toilers against the exploiters in order to help the former to perform the tasks that follow from the doctrines of Communism.

The members of the League should spend every spare hour in improving the vegetable gardens, or in organizing the education of young people in some mill or factory, and so forth.

We want to transform Russia from a poverty-stricken and wretched country into a wealthy country. And the Young Communist League must combine its education, teaching and training with the labour of the workers and peasants, so as not

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The Young Communist League must train everybody to conscious and disciplined labour while they are still young, from the age of twelve.

That is what will enable us to count on the problems that are now confronting us being solved.

We must reckon that not less than ten years will be required for the electrification of the country, so that our impoverished land may be served by the latest achievements of technology.

And so, the generation which is now fifteen years old, and which in ten or twenty years' time will be living in Communist society, must arrange all their educational tasks in such a way that every day, in every village and in every city, the young people shall engage in the practical solution of some problem of common labour, even though the smallest, even though the simplest.

To the extent that this is done in every village, to the extent that Communist competition develops, to the extent that the youth prove that they can unite their labour, to that extent will the success of Communist construction be ensured.

Only by regarding every step one takes from the standpoint of the success of this construction, only by asking ourselves whether we have done all we can to be united, conscious toilers, only in this long process will the Young Communist League succeed in uniting its half a million members into a single army of labour and win universal respect.

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even from the purely theoretical point of view, what strikes one in the case of all of them is their utter failure to grasp the following piece of Marxian reasoning. Up to now they have seen capitalism and bourgeois democracy in Western Europe follow a definite path of development, and they cannot conceive that this path can be taken as a model only *mutatis mutandis*, only with certain modifications (quite insignificant from the standpoint of world history).

*Firstly*—the revolution that broke out in connection with the first imperialist World War. That revolution was bound to reveal new features, or variations, called forth by the war; for such a war and such a situation had never occurred in the world before. We find that since the war the bourgeoisie of the wealthiest countries have been unable to this day to restore “normal” bourgeois relations. Yet our reformists, petty bourgeois who pretend to be revolutionaries, believed, and still believe that normal bourgeois relations are the limit (thus far and no further shalt thou go). And even their conception of the “normal” is utterly commonplace and narrow.

*Secondly*, they are complete strangers to the idea that, although the development of world history as a whole follows general laws, this does not in the least preclude, but, on the contrary, presupposes the possibility that certain periods of development may display peculiar features in form or in order of development. For instance, it does not even occur to them that Russia, standing as she does on the borderline between the civilized countries and the countries which this war had for the first time definitely brought into the orbit of civilization, that is, all the Oriental, non-European countries, therefore could, and was indeed bound to reveal certain peculiar features which, while, of course, in keeping with the general line of world development, distinguish her revolution from all previous revolutions in West European countries, and which introduce certain novel features in passing to the Oriental countries.

Infinitely commonplace, for instance, is the argument they learned by rote during the development of West European Social-Democracy, that we are not yet ripe for Socialism; that, as certain of the “learned” gentlemen among them express it, we lack the objective economic premises for Socialism in our

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You say that civilization is necessary for the creation of Socialism. Very good. But why could we not begin creating such prerequisites of civilization in our country by expelling the Russian landlords and capitalists and start moving towards Socialism after that? Where, in what books, have you read that such variations of the customary historical order of events are impermissible, or impossible?

I remember that Napoleon once wrote: *On s'engage et puis... on voit*. Rendered freely this means: One must first plunge into a big battle and then see what happens. Well, we first plunged into a big battle in October 1917, and later we saw the details of development (from the standpoint of world history they were only certain details, of course) such as the Brest-Litovsk Peace, the new economic policy, and so forth. And now there can be no doubt that, in the main, we have been victorious.

It never occurs to our Sukhanovs, not to speak of the Social-Democrats who are still more to the Right, that if it were not for this, revolutions could not be made at all. It never occurs to our European philistines that subsequent revolutions in Oriental countries, which possess far larger populations, and whose social conditions reveal far greater diversity, will undoubtedly display even more peculiar features than the Russian Revolution.

It need hardly be said that a textbook written on Kautskyan lines was a useful thing in its day. But it is really high time to abandon the idea that this textbook foresaw all forms of development of subsequent world history. It is high time to say that those who think so are simply fools.

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mention Chernyshevsky, from whom the modern Narodniks (the Populist Socialists, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) have retreated frequently in a quest for fashionable reactionary philosophical doctrines, captivated by the tinsel of the so-called "last word" in European science and unable to discern beneath this tinsel one or another variety of servility to the bourgeoisie, bourgeois prejudice and bourgeois reaction.

At any rate, in Russia we still have—and shall undoubtedly have for a fairly long time to come—materialists from the non-Communist camp, and it is our absolute duty to enlist all adherents of consistent and militant materialism in the joint work of combating philosophical reaction and the philosophical prejudices of so-called "educated society." Dietzgen senior<sup>1</sup>—not to be confused with his writer son, who was as pretentious as he was unsuccessful—correctly, aptly and clearly expressed the fundamental Marxist view of the philosophical trends which prevail in bourgeois countries and which enjoy the attention of their scientists and publicists, when he said that in effect the professors of philosophy in modern society are in the majority of cases nothing but the "graduated flunkys of clericalism."

Our Russian intellectuals, who are fond of thinking themselves advanced, as indeed their brethren in all other countries, are very much averse to shifting the question to the plane of the opinion expressed in Dietzgen's words. But they are averse to it because they cannot look the truth in the face. One has only to reflect ever so little on the governmental, general economic, social and every other kind of dependence of modern educated people on the ruling bourgeoisie to realize that Dietzgen's mordant description was absolutely true. One has only to recall the vast majority of the fashionable philosophical trends that arise so frequently in European countries, beginning for example with those connected with the discovery of radium and ending with those which seek to clutch hold of Einstein, to gain an idea of the connection between the class interests and the class position of the bourgeoisie and its support of all forms of religion on the one hand, and the

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Joseph Dietzgen (1828-88), a German philosopher and materialist, a tanner by trade.—Ed.

mention Chernyshevsky, from whom the modern Narodniks (the Populist Socialists, Socialist-Revolutionaries, etc.) have retreated frequently in a quest for fashionable reactionary philosophical doctrines, captivated by the tinsel of the so-called "last word" in European science and unable to discern beneath this tinsel one or another variety of servility to the bourgeoisie, bourgeois prejudice and bourgeois reaction.

At any rate, in Russia we still have—and shall undoubtedly have for a fairly long time to come—materialists from the non-Communist camp, and it is our absolute duty to enlist all adherents of consistent and militant materialism in the joint work of combating philosophical reaction and the philosophical prejudices of so-called "educated society." Dietzgen senior<sup>1</sup>—not to be confused with his writer son, who was as pretentious as he was unsuccessful—correctly, aptly and clearly expressed the fundamental Marxist view of the philosophical trends which prevail in bourgeois countries and which enjoy the attention of their scientists and publicists, when he said that in effect the professors of philosophy in modern society are in the majority of cases nothing but the "graduated flunkys of clericalism."

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scripts pointing out the progress made by mankind since the end of the eighteenth century in the scientific criticism of religions, mentioning the latest writings on the subject, and so forth. It would be the biggest and most grievous mistake a Marxist could make to think that the millions (especially the peasants and artisans), who have been condemned by all modern society to darkness, ignorance and prejudice, can extricate themselves from this darkness only along the straight line of a purely Marxist education. These millions should be supplied with the most varied atheist propaganda material, they should be made acquainted with facts from the most varied spheres of life, they should be approached in this way and in that way, so as to interest them, rouse them from their religious torpor, stir them from the most varied angles and by the most varied methods, and so forth.

The keen, vivacious and talented writings of the old atheists of the eighteenth century, which wittily and openly attacked the prevailing clericalism, will very often prove to be a thousand times more suitable for arousing people from their religious torpor than the dull and dry paraphrases of Marxism, almost completely unillustrated by skilfully selected facts, which predominate in our literature and which (it is no use hiding the fact) frequently distort Marxism. We have translations of all the bigger works of Marx and Engels. There are absolutely no grounds for fearing that the old atheism and old materialism may remain unsupplemented by the corrections introduced by Marx and Engels. The most important thing—and this is most frequently overlooked by our would-be Marxian Communists, who in fact mutilate Marxism—is to know how to awaken in the still quite undeveloped masses a conscious interest in religious questions and a conscious criticism of religion.

On the other hand, take a glance at the representatives of the modern scientific criticism of religion. These representatives of the educated bourgeoisie almost invariably "supplement" their own refutations of religious prejudices by arguments which immediately expose them as ideological slaves of the bourgeoisie, as "graduated flunkies of clericalism."

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class organizations of the modern bourgeoisie are connected with the organizations of religious institutions and religious propaganda.

Extremely important is all material relating to the United States of America, where the official, state connection between religion and capital is less manifest. But, on the other hand, it makes it clearer to us that so-called "modern democracy" (which the Mensheviks, the Socialist-Revolutionaries, partly also the Anarchists, etc., so unreasonably worship) is nothing but the freedom to preach what it is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie to preach, namely, the most reactionary ideas, religion, obscurantism, defence of the exploiters, etc.

One would like to hope that a magazine which sets out to be an organ of militant materialism will provide our reading public with reviews of atheist literature, showing for which circle of readers any particular writing might be suitable and in what respect, and mentioning what literature has been published in our country (only decent translations should be noticed, and they are not so many) and what should still be published.

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In addition to the alliance with consistent materialists who do not belong to the Communist Party, of no less and perhaps even of more importance for the work which militant materialism should perform is an alliance with those representatives of modern natural science who incline towards materialism and are not afraid to defend and preach it as against the modish philosophical wanderings into idealism and scepticism which are prevalent in so-called "educated society."

The article by A. Timiryazev on Einstein's theory of relativity published in *Under the Banner of Marxism*, No. 1-2, permits us to hope that the magazine will succeed in effecting this second alliance too. Greater attention should be paid to it. It should be remembered that it is precisely the abrupt change which modern natural science is undergoing that very often gives rise to reactionary philosophical schools and minor schools, trends and minor trends. Therefore, unless the problems raised by the recent revolution in natural science are fol-

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Unless it sets itself such a task, and systematically fulfils it, materialism cannot be militant materialism. It will be not so much the combatant as the combated, to use an expression of Shchedrin's. Without this, great natural scientists will as often as hitherto be helpless in making their philosophical deductions and generalizations. For natural science is progressing so fast and is undergoing such a profound revolutionary change in all spheres that it cannot possibly dispense with philosophical deductions.

In conclusion, I will cite an example which, while not related to the domain of philosophy, is at any rate related to the domain of social questions, to which the magazine *Under the Banner of Marxism* also desires to devote attention.

It is an example of the way in which modern pseudo-science serves in effect as a vehicle for the grossest and most infamous reactionary views.

I was recently sent a copy of the *Economist*, No. 1 (1922), published by the Eleventh Department of the Russian Technical Society. The young Communist who sent me this journal (he probably had no time to acquaint himself with its contents) rashly expressed an exceedingly sympathetic opinion of it. In reality the journal is—I do not know how deliberately—

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If 92 divorces for every 10,000 marriages seem to Mr. Sorokin a fantastic figure, one can only suppose either that the author lived and was brought up in a monastery so entirely walled-off from life that hardly anyone will believe that such a monastery ever existed, or that the author is distorting the truth in the interests of reaction and the bourgeoisie. Anybody in the least acquainted with social conditions in bourgeois countries knows that the actual number of actual divorces (of course, not sanctioned by church and law) is everywhere immeasurably greater. The only difference between Russia and other countries in this respect is that our laws do not sanctify hypocrisy and the unfranchised position of woman and her child, but openly and in the name of the government declare systematic war on all hypocrisy and on all unfranchisement.

The Marxist magazine will have to wage war also on these modern "educated" feudalists. Many of them, very likely, are in receipt of government money and are engaged in government employment in educating the youth, although they are no more fitted for this than notorious seducers are fitted for the post of superintendents of educational establishments for the young.

The working class of Russia has succeeded in winning power; but it has not yet learnt to utilize it, for otherwise it long ago would have very politely dispatched such teachers and members of learned societies to countries with a bourgeois "democracy." That is the proper place for such feudalists.

But it will learn, if it only wants to learn.

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- Novoye Vremya (New Times)*—a newspaper published in St. Petersburg from 1868 to October 1917. At first the *Novoye Vremya* pursued a moderate liberal line, but beginning with 1876 it became the press organ of the conservative aristocratic and bureaucratic circles and was subsidized by the tsarist government. The paper waged a persistent struggle not only against the revolutionary but even against the liberal bourgeois movement. From 1905 onwards it became one of the mouthpieces of the Black-Hundreds.
- Novaya Zhizn (New Life)*—a daily newspaper published in Petrograd in 1917-18, organ of the Social-Democrats-Internationalists (Mensheviks).
- Obrazovaniye (Education)*—a popular scientific, social-political and literary monthly founded in 1892 in St. Petersburg. Marxist writers contributed to the magazine from 1903 to 1907. *Obrazovaniye* ceased publication in 1909.
- Otkliki (Comments)*—Menshevik symposiums published in the period 1906-07.
- Proletary*—Bolshevik central organ. The newspaper began publication on May 27, 1905 by decision of the Third Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. It was edited by Lenin who was the author of the most important articles printed in its columns. The last issue (No. 26) came out in November 1905.
- Rabochaya Gazeta (Workers' Gazette)*—newspaper published by the Kiev Social-Democrats in 1897. It was declared the central organ of the Party by the First Congress of the R.S.D.L.P. in 1898. Only two numbers were issued.
- Rabochaya Mysl (Workers' Thought)*—a newspaper published in St. Petersburg (illegally) and in Berlin by the "Economists" from October 1897 to December 1902.
- Rabocheye Dyelo (Workers' Cause)*—an "Economist" periodical published by the League of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad from April 1899 to February 1902.
- Revolutionnaya Rossiya (Revolutionary Russia)*—central organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. The newspaper was published from 1901 to 1905.
- Russkaya Starina (Russian Antiquity)*—a monarchist historical magazine published in St. Petersburg in the period 1870-1918.
- Russkoye Bogatstvo (Russian Wealth)*—a monthly magazine published from 1876 to the middle of 1918. In the beginning of the 'nineties it

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by reason of the position in life of the class from which it proceeds. must necessarily develop into a Communist movement, if he had shown that the Communist tendencies in America had at first to reveal themselves in this agrarian form. which seems to contradict all Communism, there would have been nothing to object to. But he declares what is only a subordinate form of a movement of certain definite people to be the cause of mankind in general: he represents it . . . as the final and highest aim of every movement in general and thus transforms the definite aims of the movement into sheer bombastic nonsense. In the same article [No. 10] he continues unperturbed to chant his song of triumph: 'And thus the old dreams of the Europeans would at last come true. A place would be prepared for them on this side of the ocean which they would only have to take and to fructify with the labour of their hands and they would be able proudly to declare to all the tyrants of the world: This is *my* cabin which you have not built; this is *my* hearth whose glow fills your hearts with envy.'

"He might have added: This is *my* dungheap which I, my wife, my children, my manservant and my cattle have produced And who are the Europeans whose 'dreams' would thus come true? Not the Communist workers, but bankrupt shopkeepers and handicraftsmen, or ruined cotters, who yearn for the good fortune of once again becoming petty bourgeois and peasants in America. And what is the 'wish' that is to be realized by means of these 1,400,000,000 acres? No other than that all men be converted into private owners, a wish which is as practical and as Communistic as the wish to convert all men into emperors, kings and popes."

Marx's criticism is full of venom and sarcasm. He castigates Kriege for precisely those aspects of his views which we now observe among our "Socialist-Revolutionaries": the predominance of phrases, petty-bourgeois utopias advanced as the highest revolutionary utopianism, failure to understand the real foundations of the modern economic system and its development. With remarkable penetration, Marx, who was then only a *future* economist, points to the role of exchange and commodity production. The peasants will exchange, if not land, then at least the produce of the land, he says—and that

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peasant movement in Russia. This we must explain by every means in our power, and we must ruthlessly and irreconcilably combat all the illusions of all the "Socialist-Revolutionaries" or primitive Socialists on this score. The separate organization of an independent party of the proletariat which, through all democratic changes, will strive for a complete Socialist revolution, must be our constant aim, which must not be lost sight of for a moment. But to turn our backs on the peasant movement on this ground would be hopeless philistinism and pedantry. No, there is no doubt about the revolutionary and democratic nature of this movement, and we must support it with all our might, develop it, make it a politically conscious and definitely class movement, push it forward, march hand in hand with it to the end—for we are marching far beyond the end of any peasant movement; we are marching to the very end of the division of society into classes. There is hardly another country in the world where the peasantry is experiencing such suffering, such oppression and humiliation as in Russia. The more gloomy this oppression of the peasantry has been, the more powerful will now be its awakening, the more invincible its revolutionary onslaught. It is the business of the class-conscious revolutionary proletariat to support this onslaught with all its might, so that it may leave no stone standing of this old, accursed, feudal and autocratic slavish Russia, so that it may create a new generation of bold and free people, a new republican country in which our proletarian struggle for Socialism will have room to expand.

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"After a revolution," wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on September 14, 1848, "every provisional organization of the state requires a dictatorship, and an energetic dictatorship at that. From the very beginning we have reproached Camphausen" (the head of the Ministry after March 18. 1848) "for not acting dictatorially, for not having immediately smashed up and eliminated the remnants of the old institutions. And while Herr Camphausen was lulling himself with constitutional illusions, the defeated party (*i.e.*, the party of reaction) strengthened its positions in the bureaucracy and in the army, and here and there even began to venture upon open struggle."

Here, Mehring justly remarks, we have in a few sentences a summary of all that was propounded in detail in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in long articles on the Camphausen Ministry. What do these words of Marx tell us? That a provisional revolutionary government *must* act dictatorially (a proposition which the *Iskra* was totally unable to grasp since it was fighting shy of the slogan of dictatorship), and that the task of such a dictatorship is to destroy the remnants of the old institutions (which is precisely what was clearly stated in the resolution of the Third Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party about the struggle against counter-revolution and what, as we have shown above, was omitted in the resolution of the Conference). Thirdly, and lastly, it follows from these words that Marx castigated the bourgeois

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reactionary attempts of the obsolete governments, and the force of public opinion which it would then have won for itself would be so great that all bayonets and rifle butts would have been splintered against it. . . . But this Assembly bores the German people instead of carrying the people with it or being carried away by it." In Marx's opinion, the National Assembly should have "eliminated from the regime actually existing in Germany everything that contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the people," then it should have "consolidated the revolutionary ground on which it rested in order to make the sovereignty of the people, won by the revolution, secure against all attacks."

Thus, the tasks which Marx set before a revolutionary government or dictatorship in 1848 amounted in substance above all to a *democratic* revolution, *viz.*, defence against counter-revolution and the actual elimination of everything that militated against the sovereignty of the people. And this is no other than a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship.

To proceed: which classes, in Marx's opinion, could and should have achieved this task (actually to exercise to the end the principle of the sovereignty of the people and to beat off the attacks of the counter-revolution)? Marx speaks of the "people." But we know that he always ruthlessly combated the petty-bourgeois illusions about the unity of the "people" and about the absence of a class struggle within the people. In using the word "people," Marx did not thereby gloss over class differences, but united definite elements capable of carrying the revolution to completion.

After the victory of the Berlin proletariat on March 18, wrote the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, the results of the revolution proved to be twofold: "On the one hand the arming of the people, the right of association, the sovereignty of the people actually attained; on the other hand, the preservation of the monarchy and the Camphausen-Hanseman Ministry, *i.e.*, the government of the representatives of the upper bourgeoisie. Thus the revolution had two series of results, which had necessarily to diverge. The people had emerged victorious, it had won liberties of a decisively democratic nature, but the direct power passed not into its hands, but into those of the big

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July 29, 1848: "... the German revolution of 1848 is only a parody of the French revolution of 1789.

"On August 4, 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the French people in a single day prevailed over the feudal burdens.

"On July 11, 1848, four months after the March barricades, the feudal burdens prevailed over the German people. *Teste Gierke cum Hansemanno*.<sup>1</sup>

"The French bourgeoisie of 1789 did not for a moment leave its allies, the peasants, in the lurch. It knew that the foundation of its rule was the destruction of feudalism in the countryside, the creation of a free landowning (*grundbesitzenden*) peasant class.

"The German bourgeoisie of 1848 is without the least compunction betraying the peasants, who are its most natural allies, the flesh of its flesh, and without whom it is powerless against the nobility.

"The continuance of feudal rights, their sanction under the guise of (illusory) redemption—such is the result of the German revolution of 1848. That is the little wool out of the great cry."

This is a very instructive passage: it gives us four important propositions: 1) The incompleted German revolution differs from the completed French revolution in that the German bourgeoisie betrayed not only democracy in general, but also the peasantry in particular. 2) The foundation for the full consummation of a democratic revolution is the creation of a free class of peasants. 3) The creation of such a class means the abolition of feudal burdens, the destruction of feudalism, but does not yet mean a Socialist revolution. 4) The peasants

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July 29, 1848: "...the German revolution of 1848 is only a parody of the French revolution of 1789.

"On August 4, 1789, three weeks after the storming of the Bastille, the French people in a single day prevailed over the feudal burdens.

"On July 11, 1848, four months after the March barricades, the feudal burdens prevailed over the German people. *Teste Gierke cum Hansemanno*.<sup>1</sup>

"The French bourgeoisie of 1789 did not for a moment leave its allies, the peasants, in the lurch. It knew that the foundation of its rule was the destruction of feudalism in the countryside, the creation of a free landowning (*grundbesitzenden*) peasant class.

"The German bourgeoisie of 1848 is without the least compunction betraying the peasants, who are its most natural allies, the flesh of its flesh, and without whom it is powerless against the nobility.

"The continuance of feudal rights, their sanction under the guise of (illusory) redemption—such is the result of the German revolution of 1848. That is the little wool out of the great cry."

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the Communist Party of the proletariat, to use the language of the period) and present-day Russian Social-Democracy. Here is what Mehring says:

"It" (the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*) "appeared in the political arena as the 'organ of democracy,' and although the red thread that ran through all its articles is unmistakable, it at first represented the interests of the bourgeois revolution against absolutism and feudalism to a greater extent than the interests of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. Very little is to be found in its columns about the separate labour movement during the years of the revolution, although one should not forget that along with it there appeared twice a week, under the editorship of Moll and Schapper, a special organ of the Cologne Labour League. At any rate, the present-day reader will be struck by how little attention the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* paid to the German labour movement of its day, although its most capable mind, Stephan Born, was a pupil of Marx and Engels in Paris and Brussels and was now [in 1848] correspondent for their newspaper in Berlin. Born relates in his *Memoirs* that Marx and Engels never expressed a single word in disapproval of his agitation among the workers; nevertheless, it appears probable from subsequent declarations of Engels' that they were dissatisfied, at least with the methods of this agitation. Their dissatisfaction was justified inasmuch as the class consciousness of the proletariat in by far the greater part of Germany was as yet entirely undeveloped, and Born was forced to make many concessions to it, which could not stand the test of criticism from the viewpoint of the *Communist Manifesto*. Their dissatisfaction was unjustified inasmuch as Born managed nonetheless to maintain the agitation conducted by him on a relatively high plane.... Without doubt, Marx and Engels were also historically and politically right in thinking that it was to the utmost interest of the working class primarily to push the bourgeois revolution forward as far as possible.... Nevertheless, a remarkable proof of how the elementary instinct of the labour movement is able to correct the conceptions of the most brilliant thinkers is provided by the fact that in April 1849 they decided in favour of a specific workers' organization and of participation in the

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This is what Engels wrote of Born in 1885 (in his preface to the *Enthüllungen über den Kommunistenprozess zu Köln*. Zurich, 1885):<sup>1</sup>

The members of the Communist League everywhere stood at the head of the extreme democratic movement, proving thereby that the League was an excellent school of revolutionary action. And he went on to say: "... the compositor Stephan Born, who had worked in Brussels and Paris as an active member of the League, founded a Workers' Brotherhood (*Arbeiterverbrüderung*) in Berlin which became fairly widespread and existed until 1850. Born, a very talented young man, who, however, was rather too much in a hurry to become a big political figure, fraternized with the most miscellaneous ragtag and bobtail (*Kreti und Plethi*) in order to get a crowd together, and was not at all the man who could bring unity into the discordant tendencies, light into the chaos. Consequently, in the official publications of the association the views represented in the *Communist Manifesto* are mingled hodge-podge with guild recollections and guild aspirations, fragments of Louis Blanc and Proudhon, protectionism, etc.; in short they desired to be all things to all men (*Allen alles sein*). In particular, strikes, trade unions and producers' co-operatives were set going, and it was forgotten that what had to be done above all was, by means of political victories, to conquer the field in which alone such things could be lastingly realized. (Our italics.) And when the victories of the reaction made the leaders of the Brotherhood realize the necessity of taking a direct part in the revolutionary struggle, they were naturally left in the lurch by the confused mass which they had grouped around themselves. Born took part in the Dresden uprising in May 1849, and got away by pure luck. But the Workers' Brotherhood held aloof from the great political movement of the proletariat, as a purely separate body which, to a large extent, existed only on paper and played such a subordinate role that the reaction found it necessary to suppress it only in 1850, and its surviving branches many years

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## PARTISAN WARFARE

The question of partisan activities is one that greatly interests our Party and the mass of the workers. We have dealt with this question in passing several times, and now we propose to give the more complete statement of our views which we have promised.

### I

Let us begin from the beginning. What are the fundamental demands which every Marxist should make of an examination of the question of the forms of struggle? In the first place, Marxism differs from all primitive forms of Socialism by the fact that it does not bind the movement to any one particular form of struggle. It admits the most varied forms of struggle; and it does not "concoct" them, but only generalizes, organizes, gives conscious expression to those forms of struggle of the revolutionary classes which arise of themselves in the course of the movement. Absolutely hostile to all abstract formulas and to all doctrinaire recipes, Marxism demands an attentive attitude to the *mass* struggle in progress, which with the development of the movement, with the growth of the class consciousness of the masses, with the accentuation of economic and political crises, is continually giving rise to new and more varied methods of defence and offence. Marxism, therefore, positively does not reject any form of struggle. Under no circumstances does Marxism confine itself to the forms of struggle that are possible and that exist at the given moment only, recognizing as it does that new forms of struggle, unknown to the participants of the given period, *inevitably* arise as the given social situation changes. In this respect Marxism *learns*,

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essential under *certain* conditions. Social-Democracy recognized street barricade fighting in the 'forties, rejected it for definite reasons at the end of the nineteenth century, and expressed complete readiness to revise the latter view and to admit the expediency of barricade fighting after the experience of Moscow, which in the words of K. Kautsky, initiated new tactics of barricade fighting.

## II

Having established the general propositions of Marxism, let us turn to the Russian Revolution. Let us recall the historical development of the forms of struggle it initiated. First there were the economic strikes of workers (1896-1900), then the political demonstrations of workers and students (1901-02), peasant revolts (1902), the beginning of mass political strikes variously combined with demonstrations (Rostov 1902, the strikes in the summer of 1903, January 22 [9], 1905), the all-Russian political strike accompanied by local cases of barricade fighting (October 1905), mass barricade fighting and armed insurrection (1905, December), the peaceful parliamentary struggle (April-June 1906), partial military revolts (June 1905-July 1906) and partial peasant revolts (autumn 1905-autumn 1906).

Such is the position of affairs in the autumn of 1906 from the standpoint of forms of struggle in general. The "retaliatory" form of struggle adopted by the autocracy is the Black-Hundred pogrom, from Kishinev in the spring of 1903 to Sedletz in the autumn of 1906. Throughout this period the organization of Black-Hundred pogroms and the beating up of Jews, students, revolutionaries and class-conscious workers continued to progress and perfect itself, combining the violence of Black-Hundred troops with the violence of hired ruffians, reaching the point of bombarding villages and cities by artillery and merging with punitive expeditions, punitive trains and so forth.

Such is the principal background of the picture. Against this background there stands out—unquestionably as something partial, secondary and auxiliary—the phenomenon to the study and appreciation of which the present article is devoted.

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Such is the principal background of the picture. Against this background there stands out—unquestionably as something partial, secondary and auxiliary—the phenomenon to the study and appreciation of which the present article is devoted.



## III

The opinion usually held of the struggle we are describing is that it is anarchism, Blanquism, the old terrorism, the acts of individuals isolated from the masses, which demoralize the workers, repel wide strata of the population, disorganize the movement and injure the revolution. Examples in support of such an opinion can easily be found in the events reported every day in the newspapers.

But are such examples convincing? In order to verify this, let us take a locality where the form of struggle we are examining is *most* developed—the Lettish region. This is the way the newspaper *Novoye Vremya* (in its issues of September 21 [8] and 25 [12]) complains of the activities of the Lettish Social-Democrats. The Lettish Social-Democratic Labour Party (a section of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party) regularly issues its paper in 30,000 copies. The announcement columns publish lists of spies whom it is the duty of every honest person to exterminate. People who assist the police are proclaimed “enemies of the revolution,” liable to execution and, moreover, to confiscation of property. The public is instructed to give money to the Social-Democratic Party only against signed and stamped receipt. In the latest report of the Party, showing a total revenue of 48,000 rubles for the year, there figures a sum of 5,600 rubles contributed by the Libau branch of arms which was obtained by expropriation. Naturally, the *Novoye Vremya* rages and fumes against this “revolutionary law,” against this “sinister government.”

Nobody will be so bold as to call these activities of the Lettish Social-Democrats anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism. But why? Because here we have a *clear* connection between the new form of struggle and the uprising which broke out in December and which is again brewing. This connection is not so perceptible in the case of Russia as a whole, but it exists. The fact that “partisan” warfare became widespread precisely after December, and its connection with the accentuation not only of the economic crisis but also of the political crisis is beyond dispute. The old Russian terrorism was an affair of the

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the weakness of the current argument. If it is a matter of national conditions then it is not a matter of anarchism, Blanquism or terrorism—sins that are common to Russia in general and even to the Russians especially—but of something else. Analyse this something else *concretely*, gentlemen! You will then find that national oppression or antagonism explain nothing, because they have always existed in the western border regions, whereas partisan warfare has been engendered only by the present historical period. There are many places where there is national oppression and antagonism, but no partisan struggle, which sometimes develops where there is no national oppression whatever. A concrete analysis of the question will show that it is not a matter of national oppression, but of conditions of insurrection. Partisan warfare is an inevitable form of struggle at a time when the mass movement has actually reached the point of insurrection and when fairly large intervals occur between “major engagements” in the civil war.

It is not partisan acts which disorganize the movement, but the weakness of a party which is incapable of taking such acts *under its control*. That is why the anathemas which we Russians usually hurl against partisan acts are combined with secret, casual, unorganized partisan acts which really do disorganize the Party. Being incapable of understanding the historical conditions that give rise to this struggle, we are incapable of neutralizing its noxious aspects. Yet the struggle is going on. It is engendered by powerful economic and political causes. It is not in our power to eliminate these causes or to eliminate this struggle. Our complaints against partisan warfare are complaints against our party weakness in the matter of insurrection.

What we have said about disorganization applies also to demoralization. It is not partisan warfare which demoralizes, but *unorganized*, irregular, non-party partisan acts. We shall not rid ourselves one least bit of this *most unquestionable* demoralization by condemning and cursing partisan acts, for condemnation and curses are absolutely incapable of putting a stop to a phenomenon which has been engendered by profound economic and political causes. It may be objected that

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demonstrations. Every military action in any war to a certain extent disorganizes the ranks of the fighters. But this does not mean that one must not fight. It means that one must *learn* to fight. That is all.

When I see Social-Democrats proudly and smugly declaring that they are not Anarchists, not thieves, not robbers, that they are superior to all this, that they reject partisan warfare, I ask myself: do these people realize what they are saying? Armed collisions and conflicts between the Black-Hundred government and the population are taking place all over the country. This is an absolutely inevitable phenomenon at the present stage of development of the revolution. The population is spontaneously and in an unorganized way—and for that very reason often in unfortunate and *undesirable* forms—reacting to this phenomenon also by armed conflicts and attacks. I can understand us refraining from Party leadership of *this* spontaneous struggle in a particular place or at a particular time because of the weakness and unpreparedness of our organization. I realize that this question must be settled by the local practical workers, and that the remoulding of weak and unprepared organizations is no easy matter. But when I see a Social-Democratic theoretician or publicist not displaying regret over this unpreparedness, but rather a proud smugness and a self-exalted tendency to repeat phrases learnt in early youth about anarchism, Blanquism and terrorism, I am hurt by this degradation of the most revolutionary doctrine in the world.

It is said that partisan warfare approximates the class-conscious proletariat to the position of a degraded, drunken vagabond. That is true. But it only means that the party of the proletariat can never regard partisan warfare as the only, or even as the chief, method of struggle; it means that this method must be subordinated to other methods, that it must be made commensurable with the principal methods of warfare, and must be ennobled by the enlightening and organizing influence of Socialism. And without this *latter* condition, *every*, positively every, method of struggle in bourgeois society approximates the proletariat to the position of the various non-proletarian strata above and below it and, if left to the spontaneous course of events, becomes frayed, corrupted and

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witnessing a wider development of the *second* struggle than was the case in the bourgeois revolutions in the West. The enemies of our revolution among the people are few in number, but they are becoming more and more organized as the struggle becomes more acute and are receiving support from the reactionary strata of the bourgeoisie. It is therefore absolutely natural and inevitable that in *such* a period, a period of nationwide political strikes, *insurrection* cannot assume the old form of individual acts confined to very short intervals of time and to very limited areas. It is absolutely natural and inevitable that the insurrection should assume the higher and more complex form of a prolonged civil war embracing the whole country, *i.e.*, an armed struggle between two sections of the people. Such a war cannot be conceived otherwise than as a series of a few big engagements at comparatively long intervals and a large number of small collisions during these intervals. That being so—and it is undoubtedly so—the Social-Democrats must absolutely make it their duty to create organizations best adapted to lead the masses in these big engagements and, as far as possible, in these small collisions as well. In a period when the class struggle has become accentuated to the point of civil war, Social-Democrats must make it their duty not only to participate but also to play the leading role in *this civil war*. The Social-Democrats must train and prepare their organizations to be really able to act as a *belligerent side* which does not lose a single opportunity of inflicting damage on the forces of the enemy.

This is a difficult task, there is no doubt about it. It cannot be accomplished at once. Just as the whole people are being retrained and are learning to fight in the course of the civil war, so our organizations must be trained, must be reconstructed in conformity with the lessons of experience for the performance of this task.

We have not the slightest intention of foisting on practical workers any artificial form of struggle, or even of deciding from our armchair what part any particular form of partisan warfare should play in the general course of the civil war in Russia. We are far from the thought of regarding a concrete judgment of particular partisan acts as indicative of a *trend*

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## PREFACE TO THE RUSSIAN TRANSLATION OF THE LETTERS OF K. MARX TO L. KUGELMANN

Our aim in issuing as a separate pamphlet the full collection of Marx's letters to Kugelmann published in the German Social-Democratic weekly, *Neue Zeit*, is to acquaint the Russian public more closely with Marx and Marxism. As was to be expected, a good deal of space in Marx's correspondence is devoted to personal matters. For the biographer, this is exceedingly valuable material. But for the broad public in general, and for the Russian working class in particular, those passages in the letters which contain theoretical and political material are infinitely more important. It is particularly instructive for us, in the revolutionary period we are now passing through, carefully to study this material, which reveals Marx as a man who directly responded to all questions of the labour movement and world politics. The editors of the *Neue Zeit* were quite right when they remarked that "we are elevated by an acquaintance with the personality of men whose thoughts and wills took shape under conditions of great upheavals." Such an acquaintance is doubly necessary to the Russian Socialist in 1907, for it provides a wealth of very valuable indications concerning the direct tasks confronting the Socialists in every revolution passed through by his country. Russia is passing through a "great upheaval" at this very moment. Marx's policy in the comparatively stormy 'sixties should very often serve as a direct model for the policy of the Social-Democrat in the present Russian Revolution.

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Take the comment on Dühring,<sup>1</sup> which, as it were, anticipates the contents of the famous *Anti-Dühring* written by Engels (in conjunction with Marx) nine years later. There is a Russian translation of this book by Zederbaum which is unfortunately guilty both of omissions and of mistakes and is simply a bad translation. Here, too, we have the comment on Thünen, which likewise touches on Ricardo's theory of rent. Marx had already, in 1868, emphatically rejected "Ricardo's mistakes," which he finally refuted in Volume III of *Capital*, published in 1894, but which to this very day are repeated by the revisionists—from our ultra-bourgeois and even "Black-Hundred" Mr. Bulgakov to the "almost orthodox" Maslov.

Interesting also is the comment on Büchner, with the judgment of vulgar materialism and the "superficial nonsense" copied from Lange (the usual source of "professorial" bourgeois philosophy!)<sup>2</sup>

Let us pass to Marx's revolutionary policy. A certain petty-bourgeois conception of Marxism is surprisingly current among Social-Democrats in Russia according to which a revolutionary period, with its specific forms of struggle and its special proletarian tasks, is almost an anomaly, while a "constitution" and an "extreme opposition" are the rule. In no other country in the world at this moment is there such a profound revolutionary crisis as in Russia—and in no other country are there "Marxists" (belittling and vulgarizing Marxism) who take up such a sceptical and philistine attitude towards the revolution. From the fact that the content of the revolution is bourgeois the shallow conclusion is drawn in our country that the bourgeoisie is the *driving force* of the revolution, that the tasks of the proletariat in this revolution are of an auxiliary and not independent character and that proletarian leadership of the revolution is impossible!

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holiday, for the interment of the revolution and its replacement by constitutional prose. They should learn from the theoretician and leader of the proletarians faith in the revolution, the ability to call on the working class to uphold its immediate revolutionary aims to the last, and the firmness of spirit which admits of no faint-hearted whimpering after temporary setbacks of the revolution.

The pedants of Marxism think that this is all ethical twaddle, romanticism and lack of a sense of reality! No, gentlemen, this is the combination of revolutionary theory and revolutionary policy without which Marxism becomes Brentanoism, Struvism and Sombartism. The Marxian doctrine has bound the theory and practice of the class struggle into one inseparable whole. And whoever distorts a theory which soberly presents the objective situation into a justification of the existing order and goes to the length of striving to adapt himself as quickly as possible to every temporary decline in the revolution, to discard "revolutionary illusions" as quickly as possible and to turn to "realistic" tinkering, is no Marxist.

During the most peaceful, seemingly "idyllic," as Marx expressed it, and "wretchedly stagnant" (as the *Neue Zeit* put it) times, Marx was able to sense the approach of revolution and to rouse the proletariat to the consciousness of its advanced revolutionary tasks. Our Russian intellectuals, who, like philistines, vulgarize Marx, teach the proletariat in most revolutionary times a policy of passivity, of submissively drifting "with the stream," of timidly supporting the most unstable elements of the fashionable liberal party!

Marx's appreciation of the Commune crowns the letters to Kugelmann. And this appreciation is particularly valuable when compared with the methods of Russian Social-Democrats of the Right wing. Plekhanov, who after December 1905 faint-heartedly exclaimed: "They should not have taken to arms," had the modesty to compare himself to Marx. Marx, he implied, also put the brakes on the revolution in 1870.

Yes, Marx *also* put the brakes on the revolution. But see what a gulf yawns between Plekhanov and Marx in this comparison made by Plekhanov himself!

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Paris workers led by the Proudhonists and Blanquists. "What elasticity," he writes, "what historical initiative, what a capacity for sacrifice in these Parisians!... History has no like example of a like greatness."<sup>1</sup>

The *historical initiative* of the masses is what Marx prizes above everything else. Oh, if only our Russian Social-Democrats would learn from Marx how to appreciate the *historical initiative* of the Russian workers and peasants in October and December 1905!

The homage paid to the *historical initiative* of the masses by a profound thinker, who foresaw failure six months before—and the lifeless, soulless, pedantic: "They should not have taken to arms!" Are these not as far apart as heaven and earth?

And like a *participant* in the mass struggle, to which he reacted with all his characteristic ardour and passion, Marx, living in exile in London, sets to work to criticize the *immediate steps* of the "foolishly brave" Parisians who were *ready to storm heaven*."

Oh, how our present "realist" wiseacres among the Marxists who are deriding revolutionary romanticism in Russia in 1906-07 would have sneered at Marx at the time! How people would have scoffed at a *materialist*, an *economist*, an enemy of utopias, who pays homage to an "attempt" to storm *heaven*! What tears, condescending smiles or commiseration these "men in mufflers"<sup>2</sup> would have bestowed upon him for his rebel tendencies, utopianism, etc., etc., and for his appreciation of a heaven-storming movement!

But Marx was not inspired with the wisdom of gudgeons<sup>3</sup> who are afraid to discuss the *technique* of the higher forms of revolutionary struggle. He discusses precisely the *technical* problems of the insurrection. Defence or attack?—he asks, as

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Marx immediately (April 17, 1871) reads Kugelmann a severe lecture.

“World history,” he writes, “*would indeed be very easy to make, if the struggle were taken up only on condition of infallibly favourable chances.*”<sup>1</sup>

In September 1870 Marx called the insurrection a desperate folly. But when the *masses* rose Marx wanted to march with them, to learn with them in the process of the struggle, and not to read them bureaucratic admonitions. He realizes that to attempt in advance to calculate the chances *with complete accuracy* would be quackery or hopeless pedantry. What he values *above everything else* is that the working class heroically and self-sacrificingly takes the initiative in *making* world history. Marx regarded world history from the standpoint of those who *make* it without being in a position to calculate the chances *infallibly* beforehand, and not from the standpoint of an intellectual philistine who moralizes: “It was easy to foresee . . . they should not have taken to . . .”

Marx was also able to appreciate that there are moments in history when the desperate struggle of the *masses* even for a hopeless cause is *essential* for the further schooling of these masses and their training for the *next* struggle.

Such a *statement* of the question is quite incomprehensible and even alien in principle to our present-day quasi-Marxists, who love to take the name of Marx in vain, to borrow only his estimate of the past, and not his ability to make the future. Plekhanov did not even think of it when he set out after December 1905 “*to put the brakes on.*”

But it is precisely this question that Marx raises, without in the least forgetting that he himself in September 1870 regarded insurrection as a desperate folly.

“... The bourgeois *canaille* of Versailles,” he writes, “... presented the Parisians with the alternative of taking up the fight or succumbing without a struggle. In the latter case,

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The collection of letters by Marx, Engels, Dietzgen, Becker and other leaders of the international labour movement of the past century here presented to the Russian public is a needed addition to our advanced Marxist literature.

We will not dwell in detail here on the importance of these letters for the history of Socialism and for a comprehensive treatment of the activities of Marx and Engels. This aspect of the matter requires no explanation. We shall only note that an understanding of the published letters necessitates an acquaintance with the principal works on the history of the International (see Jaekkh, *The International*, Russian translation in the *Znaniye* edition), on the history of the German and American labour movements (see Fr. Mehring, *History of German Social-Democracy*, and Morris Hillquit, *History of Socialism in America*), etc.

Neither do we intend here to attempt a general outline of the contents of this correspondence or to express an opinion about the importance of the various historical periods to which it relates. Mehring has done this extremely well in his article. *Der Sorgesche Briefwechsel* (*Neue Zeit*, 25. Jahrg., Nr. 1 und 2),<sup>1</sup> which will probably be appended by the publisher to the present translation or will be issued as a separate Russian publication.

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*Manifesto* defined the tasks of the fighting proletariat in accordance with the varying stages of the national labour movement in various countries.

What Marx and Engels most of all criticize in British and American Socialism is its isolation from the labour movement. The burden of all their numerous comments on the Social-Democratic Federation in England and on the American Socialists is the accusation that they have reduced Marxism to a dogma, to a "rigid (*starre*) orthodoxy," that they consider it "a *credo* and not a *guide to action*,"<sup>1</sup> that they are incapable of adapting themselves to the labour movement marching side by side with them, which, although helpless theoretically, is a living and powerful mass movement. "Had we from 1864 to 1873 insisted on working together only with those who openly adopted our platform," Engels exclaims in his letter of January 27, 1887, "where should we be today?"<sup>2</sup> And in an earlier letter (December 28, 1886), in reference to the influence of the ideas of Henry George on the American working class, he writes:

"A million or two of workingmen's votes next November for a *bona fide* workingmen's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinally perfect platform."<sup>3</sup>

These are very interesting passages. There are Social-Democrats in our country who hastened to make use of them in defence of the idea of a "labour congress" or something in the nature of Larin's "broad labour party."<sup>4</sup> Why not in defence of a "Left bloc"? we would ask these precipitate "utilizers" of Engels. The letters from which the quotations are taken relate to a time when the American workers voted at the elections for Henry George. Mrs. Wischnewetzky—an American

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But what is more interesting, of course, is to dwell not so much on these American-Russian parallels (we had to refer to them so as to answer our opponents), as on the *fundamental* features of the British and American labour movement. These features are: the absence of any at all big, nation-wide, democratic problems facing the proletariat; the complete subjection of the proletariat to bourgeois politics; the sectarian isolation of groups, handfuls of Socialists from the proletariat; not the slightest success of the Socialists at the elections among the working masses, etc. Whoever forgets these fundamental conditions and sets out to draw broad conclusions from "American-Russian parallels," displays extreme superficiality.

Engels lays so much stress on the economic organizations of the workers in such conditions because he is dealing with the most firmly established democratic systems, which confront the proletariat with purely Socialist tasks.

Engels stresses the importance of an independent workers' party, even though with a bad program, because he is dealing with countries where hitherto there had not been even a hint of political independence of the workers, where, in politics, the workers most of all dragged, and still drag, after the bourgeoisie.

It would be ridiculing Marx's historical method to attempt to apply the conclusions drawn from such arguments to countries or historical situations where the proletariat had formed its party before the bourgeois liberals had formed theirs, where the tradition of voting for bourgeois politicians is absolutely unknown to the proletariat, and where the next immediate tasks are not Socialist but bourgeois-democratic.

Our idea will become even clearer to the reader if we compare the opinions of Engels on the British and American movements with his opinions on the German movement.

Such opinions, and extremely interesting ones at that, also abound in the published correspondence. And what runs like a red thread through all these opinions is something quite different, namely, a warning against the "Right wing" of the workers' party. a merciless (sometimes—as with Marx in

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cratic Party. The *Zukunft* was run by Höchberg, Schramm and Ed. Bernstein. Marx and Engels *refused* to have anything to do with such a publication, and when the question was raised of establishing a new Party organ with the participation of this same Höchberg and with his financial assistance, Marx and Engels first demanded the acceptance of their nominee, Hirsch, as responsible editor to exercise control over this "mixture of doctors, students and professorial-Socialists" and then directly addressed a circular letter to Bebel, Liebknecht and other leaders of the Social-Democratic Party, warning them that they would openly combat "such a vulgarization (*Verluderung*—an even stronger word in German) of theory and Party," unless the tendency of Höchberg, Schramm and Bernstein changed.

This was the period in the German Social-Democratic Party which Mehring described in his *History* as "a year of confusion" (*Ein Jahr der Verwirrung*). After the Anti-Socialist Law, the Party did not at once find the right path, first succumbing to the anarchism of Most and the opportunism of Höchberg and Co. "These people," Marx writes of the latter, "nonentities in theory and useless in practice, want to draw the teeth of Socialism (which they have corrected in accordance with the university recipes) and particularly of the Social-Democratic Party, to enlighten the workers, or, as they put it, to imbue them with 'elements of education' from their confused half-knowledge, and above all to make the Party respectable in the eyes of the petty bourgeoisie. They are just wretched counter-revolutionary windbags."

The result of Marx's "furious" attack was that the opportunists retreated and—effaced themselves. In a letter of November 19, 1879, Marx announces that Höchberg has been removed from the editorial committee and that all the influential leaders of the Party—Bebel, Liebknecht, Bracke, etc.—have *repudiated* his ideas. The Social-Democratic Party organ, the *Social-Democrat*, began to appear under the editorship of Vollmar, who at that time belonged to the revolutionary wing of the Party. A year later (November 5, 1880), Marx relates that he and Engels constantly fought the "miserable" way in which the *Social-Democrat* was conducted and often expressed their opinion *sharply* (*wobei's oft scharf hergeht*). Liebknecht visited

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1889. Two International Social-Democratic Congresses in Paris. The opportunists (headed by the French possibilists) split away from the revolutionary Social-Democrats. Engels (he was then sixty-eight years old) flings himself into the fight like a young man. A number of letters (from January 12 to July 20, 1889), are devoted to the fight against the opportunists. Not only they, but also the Germans—Liebknecht, Bebel and others—are flagellated for their conciliationism.

The possibilists have sold themselves to the government, writes Engels on January 12, 1889. And he accuses the members of the British Social-Democratic Federation of having allied themselves with the possibilists. "The writing and running about in connection with this damned congress leave me no time for anything else." (May 11, 1889.) The possibilists are busy, but our people are asleep, Engels writes angrily. Now even Auer and Schippel are demanding that we attend the possibilist congress. But this "at last" opened Liebknecht's eyes. Engels, together with Bernstein, writes pamphlets (signed by Bernstein—Engels calls them "our pamphlets") against the opportunists. "With the exception of the S.D.F., the possibilists have not a single Socialist organization on their side in the

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'tability of the social revolution, but who could not possibly entrust this gigantic task to the rough proletariat alone and are therefore kind enough to set themselves at the head. Fear of the revolution is their fundamental principle. They are the 'educated' *par excellence*. Their socialism is municipal socialism; not the nation but the municipality is to become the owner of the means of production, at any rate for the time being. This socialism of theirs is then represented as an extreme but inevitable consequence of bourgeois Liberalism, and hence follow their tactics of not decisively opposing the Liberals as adversaries but of pushing them on towards Socialist conclusions and therefore of intriguing with them, of 'permeating Liberalism with Socialism,' of not putting up Socialist candidates against the Liberals, but of fastening them on to the Liberals, forcing them upon them, or deceiving them into taking them. That in the course of this process they are either lied to and deceived themselves or else betray Socialism, they do not of course realize.

"With great industry they have produced amid all sorts of rubbish some good propagandist writings as well, in fact the best of the kind which the English have produced. But as soon as they get on to their specific tactics of hushing up the class struggle it all turns putrid. Hence too their fanatical hatred of Marx and all of us—because of the class struggle.

"These people have of course many bourgeois followers and therefore money...."<sup>1</sup>

## A CLASSICAL JUDGMENT OF THE OPPORTUNISM OF THE INTELLECTUALS IN SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY

1894. The Peasant Question. "On the Continent," Engels writes on November 10, 1894, "success is developing the appetite for more success, and catching the peasant, in the literal sense of the word, is becoming the fashion. First the French in Nantes declare through Lafargue not only ... that it is not our business to hasten ... the ruin of the small peasant which capitalism is seeing to for us, but they also add that we must

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to eradicate the narrow and hidebound sectarian spirit from their organizations. They most insistently taught the German Social-Democrats to beware of succumbing to philistinism, to parliamentary idiotism" (Marx's expression in the letter of September 19, 1879), to petty-bourgeois intellectual opportunism.

Is it not characteristic that our Social-Democratic gossips have noisily proclaimed the recommendations of the first kind and have kept their mouths shut, have remained silent over the recommendations of the second kind? Is not *such* one-sidedness in appraising Marx's and Engels' letters the best indication, in a sense, of our, Russian Social-Democratic ... "one-sidedness"?

At the present moment, when the international labour movement is displaying symptoms of profound ferment and wavering, when extremes of opportunism, "parliamentary idiotism" and philistine reformism have evoked opposite extremes of revolutionary syndicalism, the general line of Marx's and Engels' "amendments" to British and American Socialism and German Socialism acquires exceptional importance.

In countries where there are *no* Social-Democratic workers' parties, *no* Social-Democratic members of parliament, *no* systematic and consistent Social-Democratic policy either at elections or in the press, etc., Marx and Engels taught that the Socialists must *at all costs* rid themselves of narrow sectarianism and *join* with the labour movement so as to *shake up* the proletariat *politically*, for in the last third of the nineteenth century the proletariat displayed *almost no* political independence either in England or America. In these countries—where historical bourgeois-democratic tasks were almost entirely absent—the political arena was *wholly* filled by the triumphant and self-complacent bourgeoisie, which in the art of deceiving, corrupting and bribing the workers has no equal anywhere in the world.

To think that these recommendations of Marx and Engels to the British and American labour movement can be simply and directly applied to Russian conditions is to use Marxism not in order to comprehend its *method*, not in order to *study* the concrete historical peculiarities of the labour movement in

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Such are the lessons which must be drawn most firmly of all by the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party which is ideologically dominated by the influence of German Social-Democracy.

These lessons are taught us not by any particular passage in the correspondence of the greatest men of the nineteenth century, but by the whole spirit and substance of their comradely and frank criticism of the international experience of the proletariat, a criticism which shunned diplomacy and petty considerations.

How far all the letters of Marx and Engels were indeed imbued with this spirit may also be seen from the following passages which it is true are, relatively speaking, of a particular nature, but which on the other hand are highly characteristic.

In 1889 a young, fresh movement of untrained and unskilled labourers (gasworkers, dockers, etc.) began in England, a movement marked by a new and revolutionary spirit. Engels was delighted with it. He refers exultingly to the part played by Tussy, Marx's daughter, who agitated among these workers. "... The most repulsive thing here," he says, writing from London on December 7, 1889, "is the bourgeois 'respectability' which has grown deep into the bones of the workers. The division of society into a scale of innumerable degrees, each recognized without question, each with its own pride but also with its native respect for its 'betters' and 'superiors,' is so old and firmly established that the bourgeois still find it pretty easy to get their bait accepted. I am not at all sure, for instance, that John Burns is not secretly prouder of his popularity with Cardinal Manning, the Lord Mayor and the bourgeoisie

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Mother Nature did not—and could not very well—permit Marx to live “to see the fun.” But he *foretold* the “playing at constitutionalism,” and it is as though his words were written yesterday in relation to the First and Second Russian Dumas. And we know that the warning to the people against “playing at constitutionalism” was the “living soul” of the tactics of boycott so detested by the liberals and opportunists. . . .

Here is Marx's letter of November 5, 1880. He is delighted with the success of *Capital* in Russia, and takes the part of the *Narodovoltsi* against the newly-arisen group of *Chernopere-deltsi*.<sup>2</sup> Marx correctly perceives the anarchistic elements in the latter's views. Not knowing and having then no opportunity of knowing the future evolution of the *Chernopere-deltsi-Narodniks* into Social-Democrats, Marx attacks the *Chernopere-deltsi* with all his trenchant sarcasm:

“These gentlemen are against all political-revolutionary action. Russia is to make a somersault into the anarchist-communist-atheist millenium! Meanwhile, they are preparing for this leap with the most tedious doctrinairism, whose so-called principles are being hawked about the street ever since the late Bakunin.”

We can gather from this how Marx would have judged the significance for Russia of 1905 and the following years of the “political-revolutionary action” of *Social-Democracy*.<sup>3</sup>

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mass. On the other hand, the course of the revolution, the character of the various political parties, and the numerous political ideological trends all reveal the inherently contradictory class structure of this mass, its petty-bourgeois nature, and the antagonism between the proprietor and proletarian tendencies within it. The wavering of the impoverished small proprietor between the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and the revolutionary proletariat is as inevitable as is the fact in every capitalist society that an insignificant minority of the small producers grow rich, "come up in the world," become bourgeois, while the overwhelming majority are either utterly ruined and become wage-workers or paupers, or else constantly live on the verge of a proletarian existence. The economic basis of both trends among the peasantry is shown in the present work.

On this economic basis, the revolution in Russia, of course, is inevitably a bourgeois revolution. This Marxist thesis is absolutely incontrovertible. It must never be lost sight of. It must always be applied to all economic and political questions of the Russian Revolution.

But one must know how to apply it. The concrete analysis of the status and the interests of the various classes must serve to define the precise meaning of this truth as applied to this or that question. The contrary method of reasoning, not infrequently met with among the Social-Democrats of the Right wing, headed by Płékhanov, namely, the endeavour to find answers to concrete questions in the simple logical development of the general truth about the fundamental character of our revolution, is a vulgarization of Marxism and a sheer mockery of dialectical materialism. With reference to people who from the general truth about the character of the revolution deduce, for example, that the "bourgeoisie" must play the leading role in this revolution, or that the Socialists must support the liberals, Marx would probably have repeated the words of Heine he once quoted: "I sowed dragons and reaped a harvest of fleas."

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and peasants will enjoy the best conditions generally conceivable under commodity production—and in that case the most favourable conditions will be created for the further prosecution by the working class of its real and fundamental task of Socialist reconstruction. Of course, an endless variety of combinations of the elements of one type or another of capitalist evolution are possible, and only hopeless pedants would attempt to solve the peculiar and complex problems that arise in this connection merely by quoting some opinion or other expressed by Marx concerning a different historical epoch.

The work here submitted to the reader is devoted to an analysis of the pre-revolutionary economics of Russia. In a revolutionary epoch a country lives so rapidly and impetuously that in the heat of the political struggle it is impossible to determine the major results of economic evolution. Messrs. the Stolypins,<sup>1</sup> on the one hand and the liberals on the other (not only the Cadets à la Struve, but all the Cadets in general) are working systematically, persistently and consistently to consummate the revolution in accordance with the first model. The coup d'état of June 3, 1907,<sup>2</sup> we have just witnessed marks a victory for the counter-revolution, which is striving to ensure the complete predominance of the landlords in the so-called Russian popular representative assembly. But how durable this "victory" will be is another question, and the struggle for the second issue to the revolution is continuing. Not only the proletariat, but the broad masses of the peasantry as well are more or less resolutely, more or less consistently, more or less consciously striving for this issue. In spite of all the efforts of the counter-revolution to stifle the direct mass struggle by open violence, and in spite of all the efforts of the Cadets to stifle it by their despicable and hypocritical counter-revolutionary ideas, it breaks out, now here now there, do what they will, and puts its impress upon the policy of the Narodnik

<sup>1</sup> P. A. Stolypin (1862-1911)—Minister of the Interior and Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Notorious for the suppression of the first Russian Revolution (1905-07) and for the subsequent period of ruthless political reaction.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> On June 3, 1907. the tsar dispersed the Second State Duma. A new election law, for elections to the Third Duma, was promulgated, which curtailed still further the rights of the workers and peasants.—*Ed.*

and peasants will enjoy the best conditions generally conceivable under commodity production—and in that case the most favourable conditions will be created for the further prosecution by the working class of its real and fundamental task of Socialist reconstruction. Of course, an endless variety of combinations of the elements of one type or another of capitalist evolution are possible, and only hopeless pedants would attempt to solve the peculiar and complex problems that arise in this connection merely by quoting some opinion or other expressed by Marx concerning a different historical epoch.

The work here submitted to the reader is devoted to an analysis of the pre-revolutionary economics of Russia. In a revolutionary epoch a country lives so rapidly and impetuously that in the heat of the political struggle it is impossible to determine the major results of economic evolution. Messrs. the Stolypins,<sup>1</sup> on the one hand and the liberals on the other (not only the Cadets à la Struve, but all the Cadets in general) are working systematically, persistently and consistently to consummate the revolution in accordance with the first model. The coup d'état of June 3, 1907,<sup>2</sup> we have just witnessed marks a victory for the counter-revolution, which is striving to ensure the complete predominance of the landlords in the so-called Russian popular representative assembly. But how durable this "victory" will be is another question, and the struggle for the second issue to the revolution is continuing. Not only the proletariat, but the broad masses of the peasantry as well are more or less resolutely, more or less consistently, more or less consciously striving for this issue. In spite of all the efforts of the counter-revolution to stifle the direct mass struggle by open violence, and in spite of all the efforts of the Cadets to stifle it by their despicable and hypocritical counter-revolutionary ideas, it breaks out, now here now there, do what they will, and puts its impress upon the policy of the Narodnik

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## AGAINST THE BOYCOTT

(NOTES OF A SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PUBLICIST)

(*Excerpt*)

### V

The boycott is one of the best revolutionary traditions of the most eventful and heroic period of the Russian Revolution. We said above that one of our tasks is carefully to preserve these traditions in general, to cultivate them and to purge them of liberal (and opportunist) parasites. We must stop a moment to analyse this task in order properly to define its meaning and to eliminate misinterpretations and misunderstandings that might easily arise.

Marxism differs from all other Socialist theories in that it remarkably combines complete scientific soundness in the analysis of the objective state of affairs and the objective course of evolution with the most definite recognition of the importance of the revolutionary energy, revolutionary creative genius and revolutionary initiative of the masses—and also, of course, of individuals, groups, organizations and parties that are able to discover and exercise contact with classes of one kind or another. A high appreciation of revolutionary periods in the development of humanity is something that follows logically from Marx's historical views as a whole: it is in such periods that are resolved the numerous contradictions that slowly accumulate in periods of so-called peaceful development. It is in such periods that the direct role of the various classes in the determination of the forms of social life manifests itself with the greatest force, and that the foundations are created for the

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